

# HISTORIC LEBANON

*Highlights of an Historic Town*

REV. ROBERT G. ARMSTRONG, D.D.

Gc  
974.602

48a

Gc  
974.602  
L48a  
1206085

ms  
H 5/

GENEALOGY COLLECTION

J

ALLEN COUNTY PUBLIC LIBRARY



3 1833 01151 3378

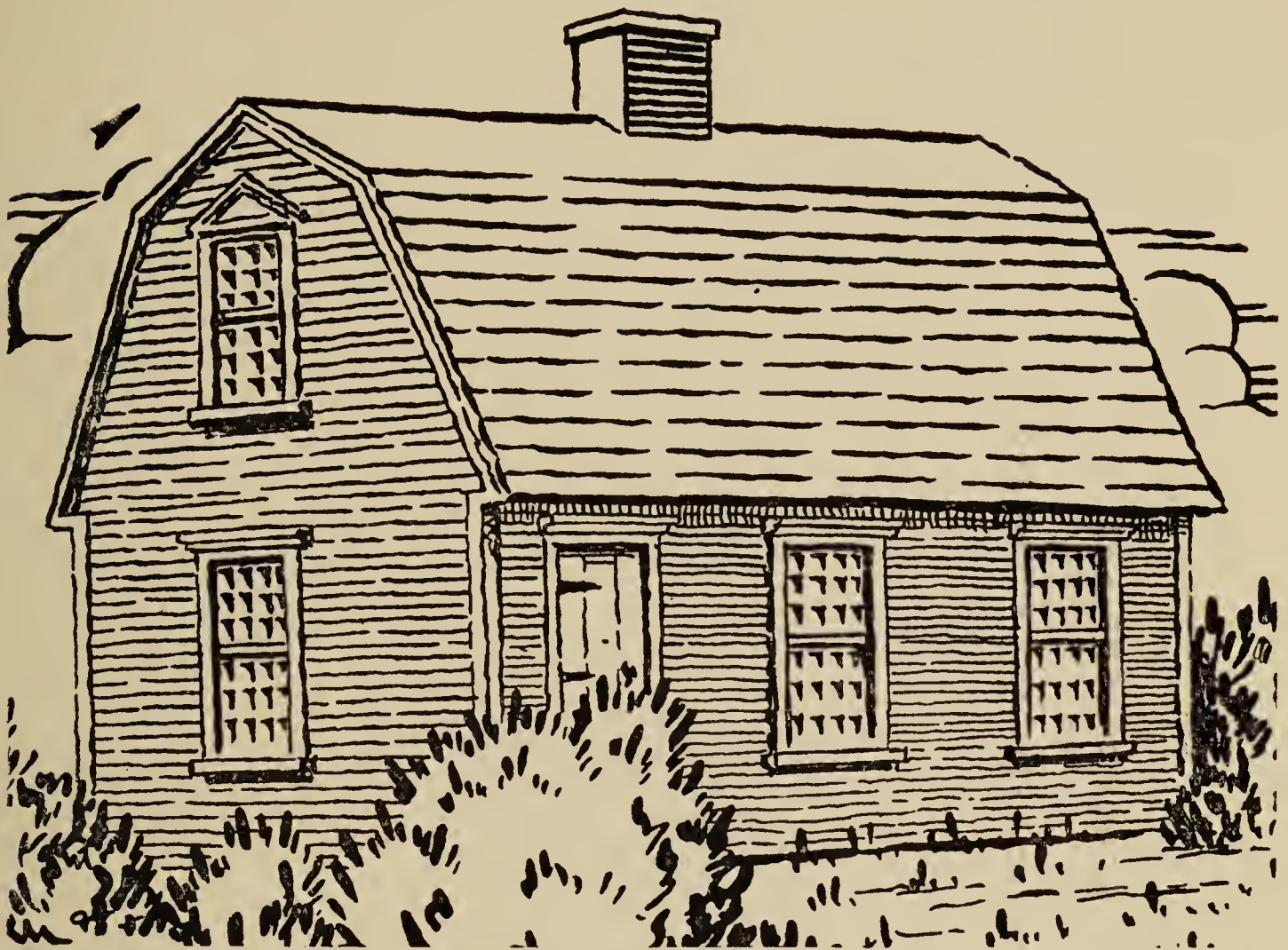




# HISTORIC LEBANON

[Donn.]

## *Highlights of an Historic Town*



WAR OFFICE

Built shortly after 1720.

(Courtesy of Connecticut Circle)

REV. ROBERT G. ARMSTRONG, D.D.

Pastor of the First Congregational Church

Lebanon, Connecticut.

*Published by the*

FIRST CONGREGATIONAL CHURCH

Lebanon, Connecticut

Copyright 1950  
by  
The Board of Trustees  
of the  
First Congregational Church  
Lebanon, Conn.

All rights reserved

*Ingalls Printing Co.  
Danielson, Conn.*

254 - 450  
Dedicated -

DEDICATION

1206085

This book is dedicated on the TWO HUNDRED AND FIFTIETH ANNIVERSARY of the First Congregational Church and of the Town of Lebanon to the nine men, who, by forming themselves into a church body, and by calling and settling a minister, according to the laws of the Colony of Connecticut, made possible the legal establishment of the Town of Lebanon in 1700.

JOSIAH DEWEY  
WILLIAM HOLTON  
JEDEDIAH STRONG  
JOHN HUTCHINSON  
MICAHA MUDGE  
THOMAS HUNT  
JOHN BALDWIN  
WILLIAM CLARK  
JOHN CALKINS

## C O N T E N T S

|  | PAGE |
|--|------|
| Dedication .....   | 3    |
| Preface .....  | 5    |
| Chapter One .....  | 6    |
| <i>The Early Days of Lebanon</i>                                   |      |
| Chapter Two .....  | 15   |
| <i>The Early Ministry</i>  |      |
| Chapter Three .....  | 21   |
| <i>The Story of The Meeting House</i>                              |      |
| Chapter Four .....   | 28   |
| <i>Governor Jonathan Trumbull</i>                                  |      |
| Chapter Five .....   | 40   |
| <i>John Trumbull: Patriot, Artist, Architect</i>                   |      |
| Chapter Six .....  | 48   |
| <i>William Williams: Signer of The Declaration of Independence</i> |      |
| Chapter Seven .....  | 55   |
| <i>Dr. William Beaumont: Backwoods Physiologist</i>                |      |
| Chapter Eight .....  | 62   |
| <i>Two Famous Lebanon Schools</i>                                  |      |
| Chapter Nine .....   | 69   |
| <i>Governor Buckingham: Christian Statesman</i>                    |      |
| Chapter Ten .....  | 76   |
| <i>Conclusion</i>  |      |
| Acknowledgments .....  | 80   |





*(Courtesy of Connecticut Circle)*  
THE ORIGINAL TRUMBULL HOMESTEAD  
Built about 1710

This beautiful old home, now known as "Redwood", was the original Trumbull dwelling at Lebanon, Captain Joseph Trumbull, father of Governor Jonathan Trumbull, having moved here from Suffield about that time.

During the winter of 1780-81, the officers of the French Army in cantonment here, were his guests and maintained their headquarters where many military and social functions were held in their honor.

Here in 1710 was born Jonathan Trumbull. Here in later years lived David Trumbull, third son of the Governor. In 1782 in this house was born Joseph, son of David, who became Governor of Connecticut in 1849-50.

There is a unique story of the return to this, her home, of one of the Trumbull daughters with her new born child, at a time when the French officers were living there. It is said that they received her, all drawn up in a circle, that they passed the child around the circle, each one kissing the child, and thereupon left the house, turning it over to the daughter.

*(From Connecticut Circle)*



## PREFACE

This little volume by no means pretends to be a history of the historic town of Lebanon, Connecticut, only a series of sketches of some of the highlights of a glorious past. Some day, it is to be hoped, a definitive history of the town will be written. Such a history should be a study, not only of the great personalities the town has produced, but of the social, political, economic, and religious developments which have taken place in its life-time. In 1925 Dr. J. L. Hypes, of the University of Connecticut, made a careful sociological study of the town which was exceedingly comprehensive. A similar study made now would show the changes that have taken place in the past quarter of a century and which are now taking place, changing a purely rural town into a suburban-rural community. Push these studies back to the very beginnings and one would have a fascinating account of stability absorbing change. Some day, we hope, some Foundation will make such a work possible.

## Chapter 1

### THE EARLY DAYS OF LEBANON

The early settlers of Lebanon owed much to the friendliness of the Pequot Indians. Not only did they give or cede lands they claimed to own, but, so far as the record goes, there was never any serious trouble from the Indians. There was a sort of an alliance of friendship between Uncas, chief of the Pequots, and the whites who had settled in the wilderness. This alliance grew out of the display of bravery and power of the English when they destroyed the Pequot fort at Mystic under the valiant leadership of Major Mason, in 1637. Uncas saw that if he could enlist the English on his side he would have little to fear from other hostile Indian tribes with which he was having trouble. So he gave his lands to white settlers, and to the colony of Connecticut, reserving only certain rights and privileges. Most of the section we now know as Lebanon was called by the Indians Po-que-chan-need.

Because of the services Major John Mason had rendered the colony in his leadership against the hostile Indians, the General Assembly gave him the right to choose five hundred acres of land from any unoccupied territory at that time. He selected his five hundred acres in what is now known as the Goshen section of the town of Lebanon.

In 1666 Major Mason's son-in-law, Rev. James Fitch, the first pastor in Norwich, was given one hundred and twenty acres of land adjacent to the tract owned by his father-in-law. Later, Oweneco, son and successor of Uncas, added a tract five or more miles long and a mile wide. Evidently the Rev. Mr. Fitch had done some favors for Chief Oweneco.



Oweneco may have had a shady title to all the lands he was giving away, but he continued his generosity in 1692 to four more proprietors, as they were then called, Captain Samuel Mason and Captain John Stanton of Stonington, and Captain Benjamin Brewster and Mr. John Burchard of Norwich. To them he gave, for a consideration, a five mile tract adjoining the Mason and Fitch tracts.

In 1700 a tract was purchased from the Indians by William Clark of Saybrook and Josiah Dewey of Northampton, Massachusetts, which included what is now the northern part of the town including what was later set off from Lebanon to become the town of Columbia. There were two other sections, one called the gore, and the other the mile and a quarter propriety.

The titles to these lands were not too clear. An Indian by the name of Abimeleck bitterly contested the right of Oweneco to dispose of lands which he claimed were his. Instead of going to war, however, they went to court, and appealed to the General Assembly of the colony to settle their claims. The General Assembly, perhaps mindful of the evils of the landed gentry of old England, looked with disfavor on such large grants of land. Wisely the members wanted settlers who owned and worked their own land. This led Mason, Brewster, Stanton and Burchard to convey their holdings to fifty-one persons, including themselves, as proprietors in common. The litigation was not finally settled until 1705 when the General Assembly, in compliance with an application from the inhabitants of Lebanon, confirmed the original deeds and vested the title in the name of the fifty-one proprietors.

The land along "the street" was divided into home lots of twenty acres each. Back of these home lots were second and third lots, also lots in other parts of the town. Each owner of a home lot, it seems, was to have access to water, either a stream running through the home and adjacent lots or by having a lot that bordered upon a stream. The assignment of the land was by lot, hence the term "lot".

The common, one of the most attractive features of Lebanon today, was originally a dense alder swamp. The homes were built on higher ground on each side of this swamp. The swamp was owned by the original proprietors. In 1809 this common was threatened. The selectmen were empowered at the annual town meeting "to sell to adjoining proprietors all such land in the high

way as is not necessary for the accommodation of the public.” “Jan. 31, 1810, the town instructed the select men to dispose of the land they had surveyed between the two meeting houses, — which they thought not necessary for public travel.” The common, as we know it now, was to go the way of commercialization.

But the heirs of the original proprietors were not asleep. They duly warned all prospective purchasers in a notice of protest: “And we would caution any, if any there be, willing to purchase any of sd land, not to proceed; for their title will surely be contested.” These heirs quoted the opinions of their former clerk and moderator, the late Governor Trumbull, that the right of the proprietors could never be taken away. “Feb. 19, 1810, at a special meeting, the *town* voted to rescind the votes passed at its former meeting, respecting selling and disposing of certain portions of land in the highways. And this was the sole business done at the meeting.”

Nathaniel H. Morgan, in 1880, added this footnote to an account about the common. “The present title to this common, or village green, still exists, unquestionably, as I think, in the legal heirs, and assigns of the fifty-one proprietors and their present living representatives; and not in the town, nor in the adjoining proprietors; but subject, by dedication and usage, to a paramount right in the public at large, to its perpetual use and enjoyment, as a public park or common.” This, presumably, is still true, for so far as the present town clerk, Miss Sarah Abell, knows, there never has been a transfer of the rights to the common made to the town.

It was at the October session of the General Assembly, in 1697, that the town formally received its name. “Ordered by this Court that the new plantation situate to the westward of Norwich bounds shall be called Lebanon.” The name came from the fact of a great swamp of cedars within the plantation which, to the Biblically minded early settlers recalled “the cedars of Lebanon”.

In 1699 steps were taken towards establishing the settlement as a recognized town. The General Assembly was petitioned to settle certain boundary disputes and to grant the right of the settlers to the privileges of such a town. To this petition the answer came back: “Free liberty is by this Assembly given to the town of Lebanon to embody themselves in church estate there, and also to call and settle an orthodoxe minister to dispense the ordinances of God to them, they proceeding therein with the consent of neighbour



churches as the lawe in such cases doth direct." Then was added: "This Assembly doth grant to the inhabitants of the town of Lebanon all such immunities, privileges, and powers as generally other towns within this colony have, and doe enjoy."

It was necessary in those days to have a church and a minister before the town could function. No man could be a voter who was not a member of the church. As related elsewhere, the church was formally organized and reorganized on November 27, 1700.

Not for five years did the town send duly elected representatives to the General Assembly. The town was poor. No tax was laid upon it during that period of time by the colony. When, however, a tax was laid, the town sent one representative immediately to the General Assembly where he was duly accredited and recognized without question. The principle was clear and definite, "no taxation without representation", a principle that was paramount in the dispute with England a few years later.

Mr. William Clark was the first deputy sent to the General Assembly for the May session in 1705. Mr. Samuel Huntington was the deputy sent for the October session of that same year. At that time the town of Lebanon had a grand list amounting to £3,736. There were ninety taxable citizens. In 1706 the grand list increased and the town sent two deputies, Ensign John Sprague, and Mr. William Clark. To this day Lebanon is entitled to two representatives to sit in the General Assembly.

The growth of the town was slow at first. It was still pretty much of a wilderness where wolves abounded, where game was plentiful. In 1730 there began a rapid gain in population and wealth. In 1756 Lebanon had a population of 3,171 whites and 103 blacks, only five towns having a larger population. Hartford had at that time a population of only 3,027. In 1774, the year before the battle of Lexington, the town had a population of 3,960, of which 119 were blacks, the largest population in the history of the town. After 1774 the population steadily decreased due largely to the migrations to the western lands, especially Ohio, after the war.

A large part of the credit for the prosperity of Lebanon in these early days goes to Captain Joseph Trumbull, who came to the town in 1704 from Suffield. He was a man of energy, initiative, and financial ability. Starting with little or nothing, he became a planter and trader. Soon he owned ships which carried products to distant lands. Twice a year a large fair was held on the common for

the sale of merchandise which his ships brought back. Buyers came from long distances. He traded with Liverpool, London, Bristol, Hamburg, and the West Indies, as well as sending his ships coastwise.

Lebanon at this time was a busy place. All trades were carried on. Cloth, leather, boots and shoes, saddles and harnesses, axes, hoes, scythes, barrels, and many other products were turned out. The numerous streams turned many mill wheels. In addition to what was produced in Lebanon, neighboring towns sent in their products to be shipped by Joseph Trumbull to distant places.

Nor was Lebanon self-centered. Though the town was never threatened by the Indians, other towns in the colony and in New England were. Lebanon responded to every call for help to put down the Indian uprisings. Mr. Jedediah Strong, one of the original settlers, was killed near Albany on one of the numerous expeditions against the Indians. Lebanon men marched to the defense of the frontier towns in Massachusetts following the Deerfield massacre. Lebanon men took part in an expedition against Canada in 1709 in Queen Ann's war. Lebanon men responded to the call for aid from the mother country, England, in the Spanish War of 1739; in the war with France when the supposedly impregnable fortress at Louisburg, Cape Breton Island, was taken; in the French and Indian wars which began in 1755 and ended in 1763 with the conquest of the whole of Canada. It is said that the drums used at the Battle of Bunker Hill were the same which had been used at the capture of Louisburg.

Then came "the time that tried men's souls". The oppression of England was becoming more and more obnoxious to the colonists, who, after all, were still Englishmen. The selectmen of Boston sent out a letter expressing their thoughts on the heavy and ruinous duties being imposed, and calling for some concerted action on the part of all the colonies. Lebanon was in full sympathy with the contents of that letter. Following the Boston Massacre, which occurred March 5, 1770, a meeting of all freemen was held in Lebanon on April 9, 1770. A note-worthy resolution was passed which stated:

"The inhabitants of the Town of Lebanon in full Town meeting assembled, this 9th. day of April, 1770, — now and ever impressed with the deepest and most affectionate Loyalty to his excellent Majesty, George the 3d, the rightful king and sovereign of



Great Britain, and of the English American Colonies, — and also being most tenderly attached to and tenacious of the precious Rights and Liberties to which, as English subjects, we are by birth and by the British constitution entitled, and which have also been dearly earned by the treasures and blood of our fore-fathers, and transmitted as their most valuable Legacy to us their children: In these circumstances, we view with the most sincere grief, concern, and anxiety the sufferings and distresses to which this country is subjected and exposed, — in consequence of measures planned by a few artful, designing men, unhappily of too much influence; and adopted by the Parliament of Great Britain; — the action and tendency of which is to deprive these Colonies of their free and happy constitutions, and reduce them to a state of bondage; — Measures which as the event will more fully show, — equally hurtful and pernicious to the British nation; — particularly as we deplore the unhappy fate of the town of Boston, in being so long subjected to a grievous imposition of a standing army quartered upon them, — induced by the false and malicious representations of the late governor Hutchinson and others of odious and detestable memory; — which, though they have not been able, agreeable to the designs of our enemies, to awe the inhabitants or the country into a tame surrender of these liberties, — have been the authors of a great variety of Evils and Distresses to that most loyal people, and lately (the 5th. of March last) of the barbarous Murder of a number of the inhabitants of that Town. But in the midst of these calamities, we have occasion to rejoice in the union and harmony which continues to prevail throughout the American Colonies, and in their firm and fixed attachment to the principles of Loyalty and Liberty; — and Do hereby declare our high approbation and grateful acknowledgement of the generous self-denying and truly Patriotic spirit and Conduct of the respectable Merchants throughout the Colonies, — in refusing to import British manufactures into this distracted and impoverished country, until it shall be relieved of these Burdens and Grievances, — of which we so justly complain; and while we esteem and respect those who have made so generous and noble a sacrifice, as true friends and lovers of their Country, We also abhor and detest the Principles and Conduct of the Few, who from sordid motives, have refused to come into so salutary a measure, and Do hereby declare and Resolve that they and their merchandise shall be treated by us with the contempt and Neglect, which their

unworthy Behavior most justly deserves: and We do further Declare and Resolve, that we will to the utmost of our Power encourage, countenance, and promote all kinds of useful manufactures in the country and among ourselves, — to the end that we may soon be able, by a proper use of the Bounties of Providence in the rich production of the American soil, to furnish ourselves with the necessities and comforts of life, — without any longer depending for them on the Mother country; — who are also putting it out of our power, and seem to have forgotten her relation; and to prefer the hazard of obtaining from us the forced and unnatural submission of slaves, — to the certain, durable, free, cheerful, and immensely advantageous Dependence and subjection of Children.”

These were strong words and sacrificial resolutions made by free Lebanon men. The resolution was attested by William Williams, clerk, later to be one of the signers of the Declaration of Independence. He was a staunch patriot, son of a staunch patriot, the Rev. Doctor Solomon Williams, who possibly wrote much of the resolution. William Williams gave generously of his substance for the cause of the Colonies. When asked when he expected to get his pay, he replied, “If independence should be established, he should get his pay, if not, the loss would be of no account to him.”

At another meeting in August of the same year delegates were chosen to attend a convention of merchants and others to be held in New Haven to consider proper measures to implement a “non-Importation Agreement.” Again the town passed a strong and vigorous resolution upholding the rights of free Englishmen in the Colonies and condemning those, especially in New York, who thought more of their wealth than they did of their rights as free men and Englishmen. The resolution further pledged full compliance with the purposes and spirit of the “non-Importation Agreement.” This is the more significant because of the vast interests of the Trumbull family. By all standards of many of the merchant class of that day they should have been Tories. It is to their eternal credit that they placed freedom and right above selfish interests. Lebanon was no place for Tories with the Williamses and the Trumbulls around.

On the day that the infamous Boston Port Bill took effect, June 1, 1774, Lebanon shared with other towns in the colonies in a day of mourning. Church bells were tolled all day; the town house was draped in black; business ceased; a solemn meeting was





*(Courtesy of Connecticut Circle)*

## HOME OF CAPTAIN CLARK

The oldest house in Lebanon (1708)

When the first shot of the Revolution was fired at Lexington, Governor Trumbull dispatched Captain James Clark and 160 men to join with the Continental forces. They arrived at Boston in 72 hours and fought with distinction at Bunker Hill.

*(From Connecticut Circle)*





*(Courtesy of Connecticut Circle)*

### CONNECTICUT INFANTRYMAN — 1775

This uniform was adopted in 1775 with the beginning of Revolutionary hostilities. It was, however, along toward the end of the war before finances enabled the Revolutionary soldiers to appear in these uniforms in any great degree.

In the background is shown the salt-box house of Captain James Clark, (the oldest house in Lebanon built 1708) who led the first company, consisting of 160 men, from Lebanon to Bunker Hill, marching there in 72 hours.

*(From Connecticut Circle)*



held. Undoubtedly the venerable Dr. Solomon Williams spoke with patriotic fervor. The words quoted in the *Hartford Courant* of that time have the ring of his voice. He said:

“Gentlemen, the occasion of our meeting is interesting and solemn. I hope we are met together with dispositions suitable to the occasion. We are now, my brethren, to determine whether we will tamely submit to every act of cruel oppression, or indignantly reject, and with manly resolution, remonstrate to every instance of unjust power, by whatever hand attempted. Persuaded, you cannot hesitate one moment in the choice of the alternative, I will propose the following Resolutions.

‘That we do all at this time heartily sympathize with our brethren of Boston in the scenes of distress which this day opens upon them.

‘That we view with the utmost indignation, the cruel act of unjust power which introduces this distress.

‘That we consider them as suffering under the hand of ministerial vengeance for their noble exertions in the cause of liberty, the common cause of all America.

‘And, That we are heartily willing and desirous to unite our little powers, in whatever general measure shall be thought best for the security and permanency of the just rights and privileges of our country. Being determined as far as we are able, to stand fast in the liberties wherein God made us free, and at the same time, would unite our ardent supplications to our Almighty Helper, the Great Father of the distressed, that American Councils may be directed by His wisdom, to these measures, that shall be most conducive to the desired end.’ ”

Events moved rapidly towards the inevitable war. The attack of the British on Concord and Lexington stirred Lebanon to instant action. Men sprang to arms ready to march at a moment’s notice. In three days a company of men under Captain Clark marched the ninety miles to Boston to participate in the Battle of Bunker Hill. When the monument at Bunker Hill was dedicated by Lafayette in 1825, Clark was one of the forty survivors present. It is said that when Lafayette heard of Captain Clark’s forced march, he, in true French style, kissed him, and said to him, “You was made of goode stoof.” Such was the calibre of Lebanon men of those days. They *were* made of good stuff.

Governor Jonathan Trumbull was to suffer a deep loss as a result of the Battle of Bunker Hill. His daughter Faith had married Colonel, later General, Jedediah Huntington, of Norwich. She went with him to the camp in Cambridge from which she could witness something of the battle. The shock of it was too much for her sensitive nature, her mind broke, and soon after she died.

No definite record is available of the number of men Lebanon sent into the army during the American Revolution. It has been estimated that there were periods when as many as five hundred men were in service from Lebanon at one time. This would mean that there was a man in service for every eight inhabitants of the town, a notable record.

The story of the remarkable achievements of the town in helping to supply the needs of the armies, of Washington's staunch faith in Governor Jonathan Trumbull, of his own family, of Lebanon's contributions during the Civil War, will be found in subsequent sketches.

## Chapter 2

### THE EARLY MINISTRY

These Connecticut hills and valleys were settled by men who had a deep faith in God and who were seeking to establish homes where they could worship Him according to their own consciences. Rev. Thomas Hooker led his little flock out of Massachusetts into Connecticut to found, not only the city of Hartford, but the Colony of Connecticut. Religion was of paramount importance. No community could ask to be set off as a separate town with its privileges and responsibilities until it could support a minister, which meant, of course, a church. A church with a minister had to precede the forming of a town.

The first nine members of the First Congregational Church of Lebanon were Josiah Dewey, William Holton, Jedediah Strong, John Hutchinson, Micah Mudge, Thomas Hunt, John Baldwin, William Clark, and John Calkins. Upon them rested the responsibility of establishing the church, calling and settling a minister. Several of these men came from Northampton, Massachusetts. A church, in those days, was not a building; it was a gathered company of those who confessed their faith in and allegiance to Jesus Christ as their Lord and Savior. The building became the Meeting House and for many years was used both as a meeting place for the church and for the town.

The minister was the PARSON, or person, of the community. He was looked up to as the leader, the teacher, the authority of the town. He held a high and honored position, but he was always subject to the authority of the church. Though he was called and settled with the expectation that he would remain with the church for life, he could, for cause, be dismissed. However, even at this



date, two hundred and fifty years ago, the General Assembly ruled that no church could be recognized, no minister settled, without the consent of a council made up of neighboring churches. There was, therefore, more Presbyterianism, in fact, than pure Congregationalism in the relationships of the churches and ministers.

The first man called to the ministry of this church was Joseph Parsons of Northampton, probably known by, possibly related to, some of the first members who came from that town. He was called here in 1700 and was ordained and installed as pastor and teacher in November of that year. The church was formally organized on November 27, 1700.

Joseph Parsons was the son of Joseph Parsons and Elizabeth Strong of Northampton. He was born in 1671. He graduated from Harvard College in 1697. For some reason, not indicated in the records, he was dismissed from this church at his own request in 1708. He then settled in Salisbury, Massachusetts, where he served until his death at the age of sixty-eight in 1739. Three of his sons entered the Christian ministry and his daughter married a minister. Thus the first minister of this church gave to the churches of New England a fine heritage. The Parson's family, now so numerous, look to this man's father and mother as their common ancestors.

The first major task of Rev. Mr. Parsons was to gather a church. The first nine members were members in good standing elsewhere. They formed the nucleus. Soon others were added. This young church probably met in the homes of the community pending the erection of a Meeting House. The story of the Meeting House will be told later.

After the dismissal of Mr. Parsons the church was without a minister for three years. Several attempts were made to secure one but the men called declined to accept. Finally in 1710 Mr. Samuel Welles, a native of Glastonbury, accepted the call and was duly ordained and settled in 1711.

The wife of the Rev. Mr. Welles had some wealth. Her home was in Boston, the center of light and learning. To her Lebanon must have seemed a crude and remote place of habitation. Her husband, seeking to satisfy her tastes, built what was then the most elegant house in town, still standing, later to become the home of Rev. Solomon Williams. But Mrs. Welles spent most of her time in Boston so finally Mr. Welles asked to be dismissed. He gave as his reason





*(Courtesy of Samuel H. Williams)*

### THE WELLES HOUSE

Home of Rev. Samuel Welles and of Dr. Solomon Williams

Birthplace of William Williams

The Welles House was built by Rev. Samuel Welles, second pastor of the First Congregational Church. It was later owned by his successor, Dr. Solomon Williams, pastor of the church for fifty-four years. Here William Williams, signer of the Declaration of Independence, was born.





ill-health. The desire was granted and he moved to Boston in 1722. Never underestimate the power of a woman even in those days!

One lively anecdote comes out of the records of the past concerning Mr. Welles. Captain Joseph Trumbull, father of Governor Trumbull, in the days before he had acquired the wealth his business ingenuity later accumulated, went occasionally to Boston driving up some cattle to sell. One day he met Mr. Welles on the streets of Boston. Mr. Welles, not too pleased to be greeted by a man in the humble garb of a drover, shied off. Later, when Mr. Welles visited Lebanon, he called on Captain Trumbull who declined to shake hands with him, saying, "If you don't know me in Boston I don't know you in Lebanon."

The same council that dismissed Mr. Welles ordained his successor, Mr. Solomon Williams, native of Hatfield, Massachusetts, possibly the wisest choice this church ever made in a minister. He was destined to serve the church for fifty-four years, to see it grow to be one of the most important churches in the Colony of Connecticut. He was a man of fine mind, of rare abilities, of intense patriotism. He died soon after the American Revolution started but in his will he left a sum of money to be used for the prosecution of the war. He molded the opinions of the people of Lebanon. It is my conviction that he was more responsible than any other one man for the intense patriotism, the magnificent contributions, the splendid leadership that Lebanon gave to the nation in the process of being born.

Solomon Williams deserves far more space than can be given to him and his work. It may well be summed up in some records culled from the sermon which he preached on the occasion of the fiftieth anniversary of his ordination, a printed copy of which is still in existence. The old Meeting House must have been crowded, galleries and all, as the old man, seventy-two years of age, reviewed for the people his ministry of fifty years among them. His own heart must have been stirred and deeply moved.

Towards the close of this sermon he says, "It is this Day fifty years since I was ordained a Minister of the Gospel in this Place. I have great Reason to thank God, that he has continued my Life and Opportunities to serve him in the Gospel of his Son, for so long a Period, through many Infirmities; a Term which is beyond the Lot of most of the Ministers of CHRIST . . . You are my Witnesses, that in the Course of my Ministry I have chiefly insisted on

the Subjects (which I believe to be) the most important Doctrines of the Gospel.”

He then goes on to enumerate some of the results of his long ministry. He baptized two thousand two hundred and eighty persons. He received seven hundred and thirty-seven into full communion. Three hundred and twenty-eight renewed the covenant. During this period he officiated at the funerals of one thousand thirty-nine persons. He goes on to say:

“The most of my Hearers, I suppose, are not fifty Years old. The most who belong to this Place, have grown up under my Ministry; but some there be who are old, yea older than myself. You can compare our present State with that of our Fathers, who are gone from this World. Do the like Fruits of the Spirit appear among us, in Proportion to our Numbers, as did in their Times? Do you see so much Care, and visible Devotion, in attending the Worship of God, in the Sanctification of the Sabbath, and the Ordinances of the Gospel? Such Concern for religious Conferences and Converse on the Subjects of experimental Religion? Such Sobriety, Temperance, Purity of Manners? Such apparent Care to deal sincerely with God and justly towards Men?” Sounds rather modern, doesn’t it? The eternal harking back to the good old days of the fathers. Then he continues:

“It concerns you all to consider seriously and examine thoroughly if this be the Case. And if it be so, it is high Time to awake out of Sleep. Such of you as have Families, should resolve first to give your own selves to CHRIST, and to devote your Families to Him, and travel in birth for them ’till Christ be formed in them. Let me beseech, and charge you, by the Help of the divine Grace, to keep up Religion in your Families; to keep your Children under a just and proper Government; see they have the best Education you can give them, that they may be trained up in the Nurture and Admonition of the Lord, kept out of the Company of evil Persons, and the Way of the Temptor as much as possible, that from their Youth they may be taught the holy Scripture, and a great Reverence for God and them.”

Four years later he joined that great company of those he had laid to rest. The funeral sermon was preached by the Rev. James Cogswell. After the long discourse deemed appropriate in those days for such an occasion, he summed up the character of Dr. Williams. “His genius,” he said, “was truly great and excellent. He



had a quick Discernment, deep Penetration, solid Judgment, a lively Imagination, a capacious and tenacious Memory. These Endowments laid a Foundation for excelling in the Knowledge both of Books and Men; and in both of those Kinds of Knowledge he actually excelled in no common Degree . . . But the Art, the Talent of Preaching was all his own. He had not indeed the strong commanding Voice, nor did he make Use of the laboured Flourishes of artificial Oratory, but his Method of preaching, in the Opinion of the best Judges was far better. His sermons were composed with Great Judgment and Accuracy, in that natural easy Method and unaffected Stile, which would induce one to imagine, while hearing his Discourses, that nothing was easier than to imitate him, but upon trial nothing was harder. His Voice was very agreeable, and his Delivery with such a Mixture of Gravity and Pleasantness, of Dignity and Modesty, of Authority and Meekness, that few, very few could command the Attention better than He."

The speaker went on to say: "He was a warm and consistent Patriot, zealous for the Rights of Humanity, an able Advocate for Liberty, and a bold and avowed Opposer of Despotism and Usurpation; at the same Time he was a fast Friend to Government and good Order, and not afraid to testify against that Licentiousness, which some have endeavoured to introduce under the Name of Liberty. In him therefore his Country has lost one of her ablest best Friends; In this gloomy, doubtful and alarming Crisis of public Affairs, his Counsels, his Steadfastness, his Prayers will be greatly wanted. But we have Reason to hope that though he is gone, those fervent, effectual Prayers, which he has put up for his Flock, his Friends, his Country, have entered into the Ears of the Lord of Sabbath, and will be heard and answered, to the ruin of Tyranny and the Salvation of our Land."

No one can measure the influence of the Rev. Solomon Williams, D. D., not only on the life of Lebanon, but in the counsels of the churches and out across the Colonies. To his study came students to prepare for the ministry. Jonathan Trumbull not only sat under his preaching, but also studied with him. He became the young man's counsellor and guide. There can be no question that much of the wisdom and insight and patriotic fervor of Governor Trumbull was due to the direct and indirect influence of Dr. Williams, his pastor through youth and manhood.

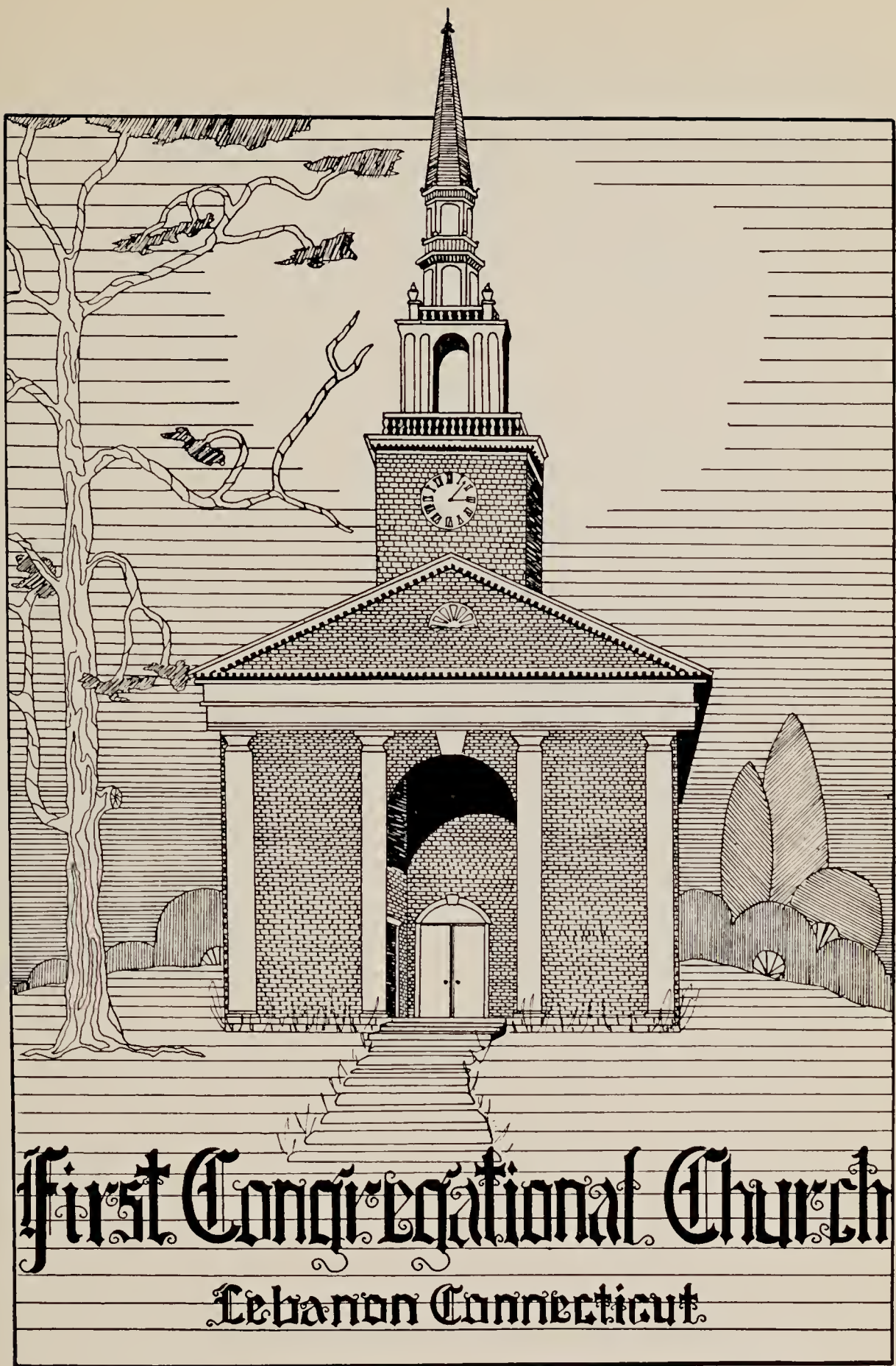
It was no easy matter to find a worthy successor to Dr. Williams. For six years the search went on until finally the church united on Rev. Zebulon Ely, a native of Lyme, Connecticut. In November, 1782, he was ordained and settled over this church here to serve for forty-two years. He was a man of sound mind, of evangelical views, an excellent scholar, of deep personal piety. His preaching probably did not touch the issues of the day as much as did that of Dr. Williams. Dr. Ezra Stiles Ely, his son, wrote in his pamphlet, "Memoirs of the Rev. Zebulon Ely, A. M.", "It was his greatest fault as a pastor that he could not be sociable on any other subject (doctrines of the Bible or of experimental religion). This rendered his company forbidding to all but pious people; and he frequently lamented this propensity to silence. A brother clergyman who knew him well remarked: 'that he had always found Mr. Ely affable and unusually communicative, because he had always proposed to him some important religious questions; but your father,' continued he, 'with most persons, is like a traveller who has large bank bills in his pocket and no small change.' "

That Mr. Ely took religion seriously is evident from the number of church trials and even excommunications recorded in the church records during his ministry. Not only was continued absence from church service and the communion a cause for inquiry, but drunkenness, family disputes, even the sin of raking hay before sundown on the Sabbath.

Towards the end of his ministry occurred the so-called "Meeting House War" of which more will be told later. Feelings ran high. There is, however, no record of Mr. Ely taking sides in the dispute, but at its close, when the North Society was definitely set off from the South Society, the latter duly called Mr. Ely to continue to be its pastor. Here he served until his death, November 18, 1824.

For half the life-time of this church, four men ministered the Word to the people of Lebanon, two of them covering almost a century of time. They gave character, stability, and standing to the church so that it was at one time rated second only to the old First Church of Hartford. These men led their people with singular devotion and implanted within them staunch character so that out from this church have gone scores of ministers and missionaries, innumerable men of light and leading in the affairs of the State and the Nation.





First Congregational Church  
Lebanon Connecticut

Irene Thompson

*As it will appear when completely restored.*





THE LEBANON MEETING HOUSE

*Under restoration as John Trumbull designed  
and built it in 1804-1807*



## Chapter 3

### THE STORY OF THE MEETING HOUSE

The Meeting House, as one drives by on the road, may seem to be only a building of wood or brick or stone, but it is more, much more. To those who know its story it has a personality all its own, a soul. That personality or soul is a composite of many personalities of those who have been baptized, married, buried, within or from its hallowed sanctuary.

The Meeting House is not the church. The church is the gathered group of individuals who have confessed their faith in Christ. As the body is not the soul or the personality of the individual but the vehicle through which the soul or personality expresses itself, so the Meeting House, though not the church, is the vehicle through which the church expresses itself. Be it ever so humble, the Meeting House reflects the joys and sorrows, the aspirations and failures, the faith and the doubts, of those who worship therein. The Meeting House may change with changing times, even as a youth puts on manhood and then venerable old age, but the church, its heart and soul, lives on through all the changes.

The old Meeting House of the First Congregational Church of Lebanon has undergone many changes in its two hundred and fifty years of life. The church was conceived before the Meeting House. In 1699 the Assembly of the Colony of Connecticut granted permission "to the town of Lebanon to embody themselves in church estate there, and also to call and settle and orthodoxe minister to dispense the ordinances of God to them, they proceeding therein with the consent of neighbor churches as the lawe in such cases doth direct."

As stated in the preceding sketch, nine men formed the original church membership. Upon them rested the responsibility for the

religious life of the community. They laid the foundations of the church that now looks back upon two hundred and fifty years of honored history. It seems probable that Dewey and Clark were the first to be elected to the dignity of deacons.

Mr. Joseph Parsons of Northampton, Massachusetts, was the first to be called to the ministry of the newly gathered church. He was ordained and settled over the church in November, 1700. He was a man, apparently, who felt that the dignity of the church was reflected in its Meeting House for he proposed to the church that, pending such time as was needed to enable the church to erect a Meeting House worthy of the town, the people build a barn on his property in which to worship. When ready to go forward with the building of what he termed "a fashionable meeting house", he would give the worth of the barn. This was agreed upon and a barn twenty-four by twenty-eight feet was erected. This structure housed the church for six years.

In 1706 the church was ready to go forward with the building of a Meeting House. It stood a little south of the present structure, was small, twenty-six by thirty-six feet and sixteen feet high. At first it was unplastered, unpainted, but in 1712 it was plastered inside and whitewashed and a new pulpit installed to take the place of a temporary one. It must have had a bell tower of some kind for in 1718 a bell was purchased. There was a gallery as indicated by an old record which speaks of "a seat over ye Womans Stairs in the Gallery".

The town grew and so did the church. A larger Meeting House was needed so in 1722 steps were started to erect a larger, more commodious edifice. Friction arose over the location of the new Meeting House. Those living in the northern part of the town, in what they termed "the village", wanted the site changed to a more central location. They looked forward, too, to the time when they would be set off as a separate parish and therefore did not relish the idea of having to pay for a Meeting House which they might not long attend. The church met this situation by voting that, if and when the proposed parish were established, all monies paid in by members of the proposed parish would be refunded, a fair enough proposition. This was but the beginning of what was later to be called "the Meeting House War".

These differences delayed the erection of the Meeting House for several years. It was necessary to refer the whole matter to the



General Assembly of the Colony which appointed a committee to visit Lebanon to adjudicate the differences. This committee came to Lebanon in 1731, decided that the new Meeting House should stand approximately on the same site in accordance with an earlier decree that that site should forever be the location of the Meeting House. It was also agreed that when the citizens of "the village" should have raised a sum of twelve thousand pounds a new society would be set off. It was also agreed that if the new parish were set off within eighteen years the money assessed the members there would be refunded.

At long last the work on the new Meeting House was started, sixty feet by forty, with a height of twenty-six feet. It was far more commodious, of worthy architecture. Through the years many repairs were made. Once the steeple had to be removed and a new one erected. An interesting item in the records tells of the appointment of a committee to "state the place where particular persons may set up Horse Stables and small Saboth Day houses in the Highway provided they will sot s<sup>d</sup> Houses upon the Edge of the Highway adjoining to some Lotte and also agree with the person unto whose Lotte they would adjoyn their House." These Sabbath Day houses were little affairs which could be heated and where the families could go between the morning and afternoon services to warm and refresh themselves.

A new bell was purchased. It was to be hung so as to swing up and down the street. The bell weighed a thousand pounds. Later a controversy arose over the way the bell was hung. Some contended that it ought to swing north and south, some east and west. In 1771 the society's committee was directed "to procure and erect an Iron Electrical Rod to be properly erected by ye Steeple of ye meeting House to guard ye House from the effects of Lightning." No doubt Benjamin Franklin was pleased on his visits to Lebanon a few years later to note this Iron Electrical Rod.

For over seventy-five years this second Meeting House served the people of Lebanon. Stirring events took place within its doors. Here for fifty-four years the Rev. Solomon Williams preached the gospel with, not only religious fervor, but with patriotic zeal as well. Here the Trumbull family held the honored pew and Governor Trumbull served in various capacities. Here righteous indignation mounted high as meetings were held to protest the Boston Massacre, to rally to the call to arms after Concord and Lexington,

to start the forced march to Bunker Hill. Here clothing and supplies were solicited for the Colonial troops. Here Faith Robinson Trumbull added her beautiful red cloak, gift of the French officers, to the pile of clothing in front of the high pulpit. Here stirring manifestoes were issued, forerunners of the Declaration of Independence, one of the signers of which was a son of the minister in the high pulpit.

Apparently all was at peace in Zion, if Lebanon could be called Zion, until the year 1802 when trouble really began to brew. The old Meeting House again needed repairs. A meeting of the society was called to consider "whether we will repair the Meeting House and purchase a Herse and Clothes necessary for burying the dead for the benefit and ease of the People and more Especially of those Who live at a Distance from the Burying ground." In view of the heat of the controversy which followed one is led to ponder over the connection of these two items!

Again the residents of the south part of town called upon the General Assembly to send up a committee to decide the matter, and, if found advisable, to order the repairs to be made on the Meeting House. The Assembly evidently heard the report of the committee and rendered a very peculiar decision. It made it possible for the people living south of the proposed boundary line between the South Parish and the proposed North Parish to tax themselves for the repairing of the Meeting House, lay and collect taxes for future repairs, and transact other business. All members of the proposed North Parish were exempted from the taxes for such repairs, but no actual parish was set up. As a result the residents of the northern part of the town had the same voting rights in the society as the residents of the southern part. Naturally enough the people of the proposed new parish did all in their power to secure the removal of the Meeting House to a location more central to their needs.

The members of the South Society raised some six hundred dollars to repair the Meeting House. But that did not end the matter. In 1802 a meeting was called to consider the building of a new Meeting House. In 1803, after several adjourned meetings, the vote was passed with one lone negative vote recorded. Then came the recurrent question of the location. A motion was finally passed to erect a New Meeting House at or near the center of the still united



parish. The members of the northern part of the town had, apparently, at last won their battle.

The actual demolition of the old structure was started, but the sight of the tearing down of the old building of many sacred memories was too much for the members of the south part of town. The whole society was soon in an uproar. Writs against the action were obtained from local justices, and the work was stopped by the arrest of several of the workmen. Soon a larger force of workmen was recruited, counter-writs secured from justices in Windham, and arrests were made on the other side, among them the venerable William Williams, signer of the Declaration of Independence and at the time Chief Justice of the County Court, who was marched off to jail without even the benefit of bail. These men respected the law for there was no open violence that day though feelings ran high. The Meeting House was completely demolished before night-fall by the northern members of the parish.

The whole situation found its way into court. The decision of the court rendered a verdict for the South Parish and damages to the extent of \$2,300. No compromise could be made after all this trouble so in 1804 a boundary was finally established between the North and South Parishes. An Independent Congregational Society was established, a Meeting House erected at the far end of the Green, but the society did not last long. Ultimately the building was torn down or removed after the Baptists had erected their own Meeting House close by.

That same year the South Society voted to build a new Meeting House of brick according to designs submitted by John Trumbull, the youngest of the sons of Governor Trumbull. He is better known today for his skill as a painter than as an architect, nevertheless he planned many notable buildings in his day all of which have disappeared except the Lebanon Meeting House.

The clay for the bricks was to be dug out of the Common. Perhaps that accounts for some of the low spots in the Common which exist today. Evidently John Trumbull first planned a domed steeple, perhaps because it would be less expensive. This plan was later changed to that of the beautiful spire, designed under the influence of the Christopher Wren spires Trumbull came to know in England, which for so many years was a notable landmark in Lebanon and which many hope to see replaced without delay.

The interior of the church was beautifully designed with much hand carving on galleries, pulpit, and palladian window. The pews were originally white until 1848 when it was voted to paint the interior woodwork. The pews and slips on the main floor were then stained a dark color.

In 1871 a movement was started to "modernize" the Meeting House. Not until 1875 was this done by the introduction of a floor at the gallery level, the upper floor to be the church auditorium and the lower floor the vestry. The palladian window was torn out and the opening bricked up. The upper windows were lengthened, the high pulpit, of course, removed. It was the mid-Victorian era when the architectural standards in this country reached their lowest, not only in Meeting Houses but in residences and public buildings.

No one in New England old enough to remember will ever forget the hurricane of 1938 which swept with devastating fury across Connecticut. Lebanon was in the center of that gigantic, irresistible force. Down crashed the steeple of the old Meeting House right onto the backbone of the building crushing out the walls, leaving only the facade standing. It seemed an irreparable loss. Certainly the community, in which every home had suffered, could never rebuild the Meeting House as once it was. The Honorable Wilbur Cross, then Governor of the State, Dr. Rockwell Harmon Potter, Dr. James F. English, and others, under the superb leadership of Rev. Howard C. Champe, then pastor, came forward to persuade the members of the parish to rebuild the old historic Meeting House, not as it was at the time of the hurricane, but just as John Trumbull planned it. A committee of eminent citizens of the State was formed, headed by Governor Cross as honorary chairman and with Rockwell Harmon Potter as active chairman, to raise the funds necessary to restore the Meeting House. Patriotic organizations, many churches, hundreds of individuals, responded. They saw in the old Meeting House not merely a wrecked building but a wrecked historical monument, a Meeting House which was a symbol of both religious and patriotic faith.

The work of restoration was well started when the Second World War blocked all opportunity for securing the necessary materials. The work was halted for the duration of the war. It has been harder to regain the enthusiastic response for the project once the work had been resumed, but slowly and steadily it has gone forward



until today we can begin to see the end, a Meeting House to the glory of God and the memory of great and famous men and women of the past.

Much credit for the detailed planning of the Meeting House goes to one who did not live to see a task he loved completed, Mr. Frederick Kelly, who put his heart and his soul into re-creating the Meeting House exactly as his fellow architect of many years ago designed it. To his indefatigable research we owe our assurance that today we worship in a Meeting House that would be most familiar to the honored members of the South Society of the early nineteenth century. This Meeting House stands as a tribute to John Trumbull and to his brother architect, Frederick Kelly.

So we have today the restored Meeting House, the home of a real church, active and loyal. It stands upon this site long ago decreed for all time as the location of the Meeting House. It stands, a constant reminder of an historic past, of names greatly honored, of stirring events in the molding of a new nation. Thus may it ever stand to house a church of devoted and loyal Christians and true citizens of that new nation now grown great and powerful.

## Chapter 4

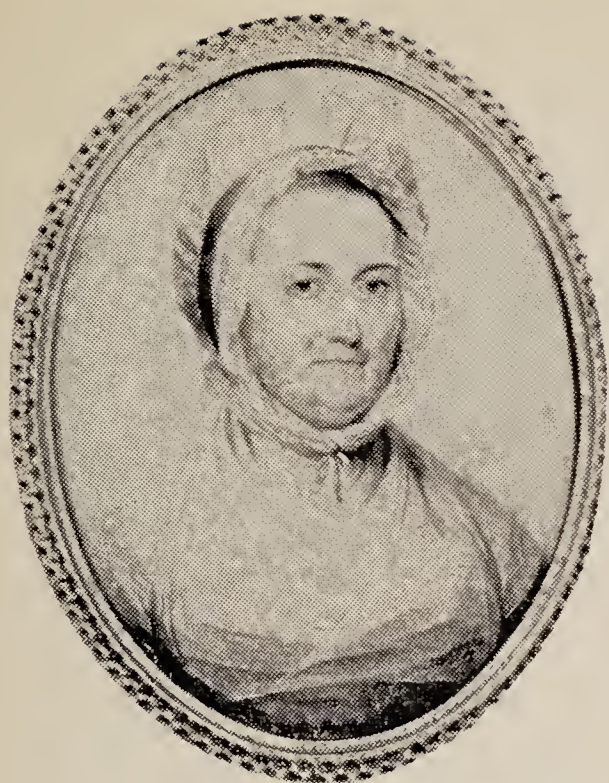
### GOVERNOR JONATHAN TRUMBULL

An army cannot long exist without an adequate base of supplies. It takes many men in the rear to support the men who bear the brunt of the battle. Unfortunately, all through history, the men who have made the victories possible by their less spectacular efforts, far removed from the scenes of battle, have seldom received their due praise for a service well done. George Washington never underestimated the full value of the services of Governor Jonathan Trumbull though the history books may pass over his life and work without a mention.

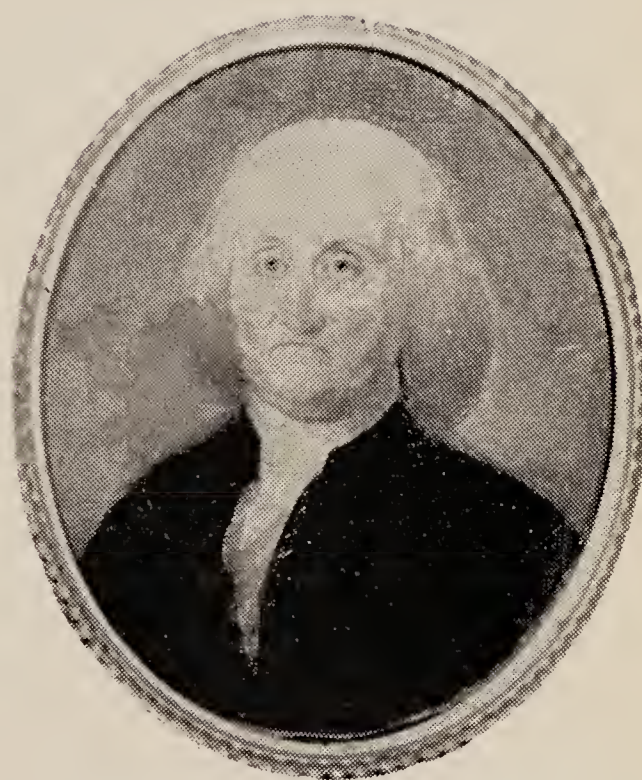
The Scotch ancestry of Jonathan Trumbull undoubtedly had much to do with his career in life. He had a profound religious conviction that gave him strength in the hours of greatest darkness: he had a tenacity of purpose that could always find a way out: he had an indomitable perseverance that held him steady throughout the trying days of the war: he had a rigorous sense of duty that mounted above all selfish interests. To all of this was added the tempering influence from his mother's side, whose line stemmed from Elder William Brewster.

Young Jonathan, born October 12, 1710, O. S., was the third son of Joseph Trumbull. He received his earliest education within the home. Then he prepared himself for college under the tutelage of Rev. Samuel Welles, who gave him a good grounding in Latin and Greek, as well as other studies needed for entrance to Harvard College, in which he enrolled at the age of thirteen. The social status of the Trumbull family at that time was not high. According to the custom of the college each student was listed in the order of the social prestige of his family. Of the thirty-seven students





Mrs. Jonathan Trumbull  
(Wife of Governor Trumbull)  
(nee Faith Robinson)  
1718 - 1781



Governor Jonathan Trumbull  
1710 - 1785  
Painted by their son,  
John Trumbull

Miniatures painted by John Trumbull





*(Courtesy of Connecticut Circle)*

Madam Faith Trumbull, contributing her scarlet cloak to the soldiers of the Revolution, in front of the altar of the Lebanon Church.

*(From Connecticut Circle)*



in his class, Trumbull ranked in the twenty-eighth place. It is revealing that when his son John entered college he received second place. Here Jonathan received something of the distaste for the social distinctions that later seemed so artificial to him. Nevertheless, he became a distinguished student, well versed in Hebrew, Greek, and Latin, all of which he was to use throughout his life. He graduated in 1727 with the customary degree of the time, a Master of Arts.

Among his fellow students at Harvard were many who later attained fame, or notoriety, depending upon one's point of view. There was Thomas Hutchinson, later to become governor of the Colony of Massachusetts, but with views diametrically opposed to those of Governor Trumbull. There was Jonathan Belcher, a noted Tory, who later fled to Nova Scotia, and Edmund Trowbridge, Judge of the Superior Court of Massachusetts, a loyalist, but one who was so well thought of that he remained in Boston unmolested. Then there was the Chief Justice of Massachusetts, Peter Oliver, another loyalist who had to flee. Harvard was educating, it would seem, outstanding young men who, for the most part, were to become loyalists rather than supporters of the rights of free Englishmen. There were a few, like Trumbull, who were to become staunch leaders in the hard fought battle for freedom. Even at that early day the idea of "no taxation without representation" was in the air. It certainly was in the soul of Jonathan Trumbull.

The strong religious impulses of his home, his college days, his pastors, persuaded the young college student to go on and prepare himself for the ministry. Upon graduation and his return to Lebanon, therefore, he took up the study of theology with the pastor of the church, Dr. Solomon Williams, who had succeeded Rev. Samuel Welles. Dr. Williams was a man of deep scholarship, zealous patriotism, vital leadership. He stood high in the councils of the ministers and churches. He did not even hesitate to cross mental swords with such a doughty opponent as Jonathan Edwards.

After some three years of study under Dr. Williams, Jonathan was ready for and received licensure from the Windham Association in 1730, and then came a call from the church at Colchester to be its pastor. Had he accepted the call he would have been duly ordained and installed as pastor and teacher of that church. Unforeseen circumstances abruptly changed the whole course of his life. His brother Joseph had sailed with a valuable cargo to London

in the interests of the growing business of his father. The ship was lost at sea with all hands aboard. Nothing more was heard from Joseph. Jonathan's father, now over fifty years of age, was in desperate need of assistance and called upon Jonathan to come to his help. It must have been with a severe struggle of heart and soul that Jonathan declined the call to Colchester to come to the assistance of his father. What would have been the future course of events had Jonathan not heeded the call? Perhaps the hand of God was in it all.

Thus Jonathan became a merchant-farmer, involved in business details of enterprises that reached far in their foreign connections. However Jonathan may have regretted his failure to enter the ministry, he was receiving a new training that would pre-eminently fit him for the high tasks which were ahead but which he could not foresee.

Advancement up the ladder of achievement began early. A good scholar, a young man who could carry his end of an argument and be listened to with respect, he was chosen, when less than twenty-three years of age, to represent his town in the General Assembly, no mean honor, for Lebanon rated then as one of the most important towns in the colony of Connecticut. For fourteen years the town repeated its choice. When not yet twenty-nine years of age he was elected Speaker of the House, a post to which he was re-elected for two more terms. In 1740 he was elected by the voters of the colony to the important post of Assistant, and Member of the Council, a choice repeated until he was elevated to the position of Lieutenant Governor. He held also during these years important positions as Judge of the Windham County Court (Lebanon then being in Windham County), Judge of Probate, and Assistant Judge of the Superior Court of the colony. In 1770 he was elected Governor of the colony and re-elected for fourteen years, the most important period in the formation of this new nation.

On December 9, 1735, Jonathan Trumbull married Faith Robinson, sister of the wife of Rev. Jacob Eliot, the pastor of the Goshen parish in Lebanon. She was of old Mayflower stock on her mother's side in line with John Alden. Her great-grandfather Robinson came to Dorchester to be pastor in 1635. Thus was carried on into the Trumbull line some of the most honored lineage of the Pilgrim fathers. Faith's father was pastor in Duxbury where Faith early learned lessons of household art, thrift, and work



through the loss of her mother when she herself was only four years old. She married at the age of seventeen.

Jonathan Trumbull's marriage was a happy one in every respect. For forty-five years she shared the honors and the anxieties of her husband. Hers was as strongly a patriotic spirit as that of her husband's. The familiar story of her impulsive act in contributing the lovely scarlet cloak which the French officers had presented her, when an appeal had gone forth for clothing for the men in service, was true to her nature.

The marriage produced four sons and two daughters. They all rendered a good account of themselves. Joseph was the first commissary general of the Continental Army. He died of overwork in this onerous position. Jonathan was deputy paymaster-general, first Comptroller of the Treasury, secretary and first aide to General Washington, Representative in the first Congress of the United States under the Constitution, Speaker of the House of Representatives, United States Senator, Lieutenant Governor and Governor of the State of Connecticut to the time of his death in 1809. Faith married Colonel, afterwards General, Jedediah Huntington. Her solicitude for her husband's safety at the battle of Bunker Hill, which she witnessed from Cambridge, brought on a mental illness which resulted in her death at her own hand. Mary became the wife of William Williams, son of Dr. Solomon Williams, and a signer of the Declaration of Independence. David was actively employed in the commissary department and in special service during the war. John was second aide to Washington, Major of a brigade, Adjutant and Quartermaster-general with the rank of Colonel. He became the noted artist and architect.

The year 1740 began for Jonathan Trumbull an almost unbroken experience with rumors of, preparations for, and conflict in actual war itself. England, still the Mother Country, was involved in one war after another. In each of them the Colony of Connecticut was supposed to contribute her quota of men and supplies. It started with the war with Spain which soon merged itself into the war with France which was to last until the fall of Quebec and of Montreal in 1759 and 1760. For twenty years the Colony of Connecticut was on a war footing and her men were to be found in almost every engagement. The shores of the colony were open to possible invasion. The government of the colony raised funds to pay bounties to the men who would enlist. It was

a long period of constant drain on men and resources, but Connecticut met every call promptly and well. The Mother Land, on the other hand, failed to appreciate the services rendered by the colonists. The clouds of the rift with England began to gather before the dust of battle had settled after the treaty of Paris in 1763.

These were years of preparation for the young legislator and counsellor. His office as one of the twelve Assistants of the Colony was one of great responsibility and gave to Trumbull an intimate insight into the administrative affairs of the colony. That his judgment was respected is evidenced by the number of special commissions and assignments made to him. Here he learned and was thoroughly grounded in the principles of a democratic government, made the more significant by the increasing amount of red tape with which England endeavored to bind her colonies. He saw fumbling war lords of England honored above men of the colonies who really brought victory to the British forces. General Lyman of Connecticut, who won the battle of Lake George, was ignored, while Sir William Johnson of New York was made a baronet. Other injustices must have rankled in his soul in the hard school of practical experience as he read the records and knew the truth. It was all a process of training that would stand him in good stead when he became governor and had to guide the colony through the terrific years of the American Revolution.

There is only one record of Trumbull having declined public service when asked. In March, 1756, the General Assembly appointed him as agent for the colony in London, an important post. At the time his father had been dead less than a year and his mother was well over seventy. He declined to serve. Again in May, 1758, the appointment was renewed and again he declined. There were extremely valid reasons for his doing so.

Trumbull was giving much valued time to the affairs of state. Probably at this time the Trumbull estate was at its peak. His father had left him valuable legacies. His mother was dependent upon him for carrying on the business which was subject to her life interest. Shortly after these appointments were tendered him, the troubles with England began to cut in on his own fortunes. His ships were subject to seizure by the British, trade with England was precarious, financial affairs in the colonies were in a mess due to the old and the new tenor values. The old tenor was almost valueless. The bills due Trumbull were in old tenor; the money





*(Courtesy of Connecticut Circle)*

## HOME OF GOVERNOR JONATHAN TRUMBULL

Built in 1740, owned and restored by the  
Daughters of the American Revolution

The Trumbulls, the greatest family in American history, lived in Lebanon, the foundation of liberty. The Governor was affectionately called “Brother” Jonathan by General George Washington, a distinction he earned because he was the lone governor of the thirteen colonies not an appointee of the king — thus a “rebel” in the eyes of the Tories — and because, more importantly, he and his Connecticut Yankees were the chief support of the stirring and strenuous effort which finally won American independence.

On the second floor of this house a guard stood in a sentry box watching over Governor Trumbull’s safety for twenty-four hours each day during the Revolutionary War.

*(From Connecticut Circle)*



he owed was in new tenor. Only the confidence of his business associates at home and abroad saved him from absolute bankruptcy. He sent his son Joseph to England to secure more trade but without much success. There is no evidence that his creditors ever pressed their claims in court. They were satisfied with whatever settlements Trumbull could make. The man who was to bear such a heavy burden during the war entered upon his tasks in greatly reduced financial circumstances, but with his reputation for integrity and honesty untarnished.

Joseph's visit to England did more than attempt to undergird his father's business ventures. While there he attended Parliament, kept his ears open, and reported home what he heard. England was beginning to put more and more pressure on the colonies though unwilling to give the colonies any representation in Parliament. In 1765 the obnoxious Stamp Act was passed in the House of Commons. Jared Ingersoll, who was sent as agent to London when Trumbull declined to serve, was appointed the stamp distributor for Connecticut, but when he arrived in the colony the following September five hundred Sons of Liberty, armed with staves, met him at Wethersfield and compelled his resignation.

Two opinions held sway in the colony, the first, that as loyal subjects of the King of England, the colonists should obey all laws however obnoxious; the second, that the colonists had certain rights that were theirs, and which not even the Mother Country could take from them. Both parties were, however, united against the Stamp Act as such.

Thomas Fitch was then governor of the colony, a man well trained, loyal to the colony, but believing that loyalty to the king was even more important. However wrong the king might be, he should be obeyed. Against him was Jonathan Trumbull, who held that no orders of the king which deprived the colonists of their just rights should be obeyed. And there the issue was drawn. A clause in the Stamp Act required each and every governor of the colonies to swear allegiance to it. With the other colonies this was not difficult for their governors were appointed by the crown. In Connecticut it was different. In Connecticut alone, of all the thirteen colonies, the governor was the freely elected representative of the people.

Governor Fitch requested the Council to administer the oath to him. There was a long and heated argument in which, un-

doubtedly, Trumbull participated. The majority of the Council refused to have anything to do with administering the oath. Four, however, were willing to go along with Governor Fitch's request and only three were needed to make the oath valid. Governor Fitch argued that the fine of one thousand pounds which would be imposed upon any governor refusing to take the oath would apply to any member of the Council who refused to administer it. That made no difference. When the oath was about to be administered seven members of the Council, headed by Trumbull, marched out of the chamber. It was the end of Governor Fitch's career. He ran for office on subsequent elections but was defeated every time. The four members who administered the oath were also retired to private life. The Stamp Act was subsequently repealed but with a rider that left a dark cloud on the horizon.

In 1768 Jonathan Trumbull became governor of the Colony of Connecticut by appointment of the General Assembly to succeed Governor Pitkin, whose Deputy he had been, to be elected again by the General Assembly in 1770, as he had failed to secure a majority of the votes of the people. Thereafter he was virtually unanimously elected until near the close of his career when he advocated a closer federation of the colonies. His personal fortunes were at their lowest, his popular esteem at the highest, though there were those who would have made political issues out of his business failures, which were due, more to the incessant wars, than to any personal factors.

Conditions under the loyalist governors in the other colonies were getting steadily worse. Massachusetts, under Thomas Hutchinson, was sweating under the Writs of Assistance, the right of the officers of the crown to search and seizure without warrants, and to call upon any citizen to assist in carrying through the act. Trumbull denied this right. It is to his credit that in Connecticut no such writs were ever issued. He wrote at this time some terse words:

"Notwithstanding the ill-judged burthens heaped upon us by a weak and wicked Administration, we still retain a degree of regard, and even fondness for Great Britain, and a firm attachment to his Majesty's person, family, and government, and on just and equal terms, as children, not as slaves, should rejoice to remain united with them to the latest time. But to think of being slaves — we who so well know the bitterness of it by the instances so con-



tinually before our eyes, cannot bear the shocking thought — Nature starts back at the idea!” Strong words for a time of stress!

Trumbull, by these words, cast down a gauntlet to those like Fitch who formed a loyalist party opposed to a firm stand. It was on this platform that Trumbull took his stand in the first election when the two parties were about evenly divided. On that stand he gained increasing popularity as the years went by. Five years before the first shot for independence was to be fired at Lexington, Trumbull wrote, “It is hard to break connections with the Mother Country; but when she tries to enslave us, and turn all our labors barely to her own emolument, without considering us her sons and free-born fellow subjects, the strickest union must be dissolved. This is our consolation, the All-wise Director of all events will bring to pass his own designs and works, — to whom we may look for direction in this, our critical situation.”

The war clouds were gathering fast in great thunderheads. England seemed obsessed to stir up trouble. A British revenue schooner cruised off the Connecticut coast taking what she wanted. She was roundly called a “pirate”. Strangely her name was LIBERTY. The Boston Tea Party had taken place. Feelings ran high. In the other colonies the people were at strife, not only with the actions of England, but with the governors of the colonies. In Connecticut the people were strongly united behind their governor and his principles of American liberty. Tories were given short notice that they were not wanted. In 1774 the General Assembly served notice to all concerned that “The only lawful representatives of the freemen of this colony are the persons they elect to serve as members of the General Assembly thereof.”

Governor Trumbull was sixty-five years of age in 1775. Instead of slowing down, he increased his pace as the clouds got darker. He took a firm and unequivocal stand for the Continental Congress against the Tories in some parts of the colony who were against it. Again and again he claimed for the colonists the rights of free Englishmen. Then came the “shot heard round the world” at Lexington. The news of the attack spread rapidly throughout the colony. At once Connecticut men marched off to Boston, there to take part in the battle of Bunker Hill. Governor Trumbull sent a strong letter of protest to Governor Gage demanding an explanation of this unwarranted attack. Massachusetts appealed to Connecticut

to hasten preparations for war, preparations which the foresightedness of Trumbull had already started.

A special "Council For Safety" was organized to assist the governor in the multitudinous duties now devolving upon him. Because three of the members appointed by the General Assembly lived in Lebanon and the others close by in Windham and in Norwich, it was planned to hold the meetings in Lebanon. The governor's little store was converted into a war office. The men appointed for the Council of Safety were Matthew Griswold, Eliphet Dyer, Jabez Huntington, Samuel Huntington, William Williams, Nathaniel Wales, Jr., Jedediah Elderkin, Joshua West, and Benjamin Huntington. This committee was charged "to assist the Governor when the Assembly is not sitting, to order and direct the marches and stations of the inhabitants inlisted and assembled for the special defense of the Colony, or any part or parts of them, as they shall judge necessary, and to give order from time to time for furnishing and supplying said inhabitants with every manner and thing that may be needful to render the defence of the Colony effectual."

Nearly twelve hundred sessions of "The Council of Safety" were held in Lebanon. Here were planned the ways and means of supplying, not only the needs of the colony during the war, but of securing munitions and supplies for the armies of George Washington. Over the threshold of the little "War Office" passed every important figure of the American Revolution, Washington, Jefferson, Franklin, Lafayette, Rochambeau, Count Lauzun, Putnam, Knox, Sullivan, and many others. "The War Office" became the very heart of the American Revolution in more ways than one.

We do not know just when Jonathan Trumbull first met General Washington, but it is certain that he was a frequent visitor in Lebanon and a constant consultant of the governor upon whom he came to lean heavily as the one governor of all the thirteen colonies upon whom he could absolutely depend. No wonder he called him "Brother Jonathan"! Scores of letters testify to the mutual confidence these two men had in each other. Only once was there a difference of opinion. That occurred when Trumbull felt that the colony needed greater defense against the enemy. His letter was somewhat abrupt. Washington's reply was conciliatory but stated his position clearly, that, were he to heed every call for the defense of the individual colonies, he would not be able to carry forward the larger objectives of the whole war, for his armies would be dis-





*(Courtesy of Connecticut Circle)*

### From an Old Woodcut

This reproduction shows at the right the Governor Trumbull homestead and at the left the store, or War Office, as it was situated at the time of the Revolutionary War, with the underground tunnel connecting the two buildings.

*(From Connecticut Circle)*



When Jonathan Trumbull was inaugurated Governor of the Colony of Connecticut in 1769 an escort group was organized which became known as The First Company Governor's Foot Guard. As New Haven shared with Hartford the biennial meetings of the Assembly there was organized at New Haven for a similar purpose in 1771 the Second Company Governor's Foot Guard. These Foot Guard companies distinguished themselves in the Revolutionary War and have continued to this time with pomp and ceremony to be the Governor's personal escort.

In the background is the Trumbull War Office with oxen-drawn wagon.

(From Connecticut Circle)

(Courtesy of Connecticut Circle)  
GOVERNOR'S FOOT GUARD — 1769



persed among the colonies. Trumbull saw the logic of Washington's answer, and never thereafter questioned his judgment. Probably never did two men in commanding positions respect each other's decision, even think more alike, than these two.

In 1766 Trumbull was asked for seven regiments of men. His promptness in meeting the requirements and requests of Washington brought forth an acknowledgment in these words: "The early attention which you and your honourable Council have paid to this important business, has anticipated my requisition and claims, in a particular manner, the thanks of every well-wishing *American*."

Not alone in men, but in supplies, did Trumbull respond. Half the powder used at Bunker Hill came from Connecticut. Axes were needed for the Champlain campaign for felling trees to build ships and a thousand of them were sent immediately. Blankets, pork, beef, flour, money to meet payrolls, all were on their way soon after the requests were received. It ought to be noted that these requests were sent to Governor Trumbull himself. In the other colonies they had to be sent to the legislatures for the governors were all of them loyalists, if not direct appointees of the Mother Land. At one time Connecticut furnished 78,400 hundredweight of beef, 1011 bushels of salt, 68,558 gallons of rum, and 500 tons of hay. The share of the colony in money called for \$1,700,000, monthly in continental money, or at the rate of one dollar in specie to forty dollars in the continental script. Connecticut was asked for one-ninth of the total from the colonies, a large percentage for a small colony, but she met it all!

Connecticut issued its Declaration of Independence several weeks before the Continental Congress sent forth the stirring Declaration of July 4, 1776. By a coincidence, on that very day there appeared before Governor Trumbull and the Council of Safety Governor William Franklin of New Jersey, son of Benjamin Franklin, unlike his illustrious father, a virulent enemy of the cause of the colonies. He was kept in enforced residence in various places in Connecticut for a period of two years when he was at last exchanged. Apparently he had learned his lesson for he thereafter ceased to be a factor working against the interests of the new nation.

The sincerity and humility of Governor Trumbull found expression in his dislike of ostentation in any way. In 1777 the General Assembly adopted the title "His Excellency" as the term of address for the chief executive. Trumbull was disturbed by it.

After a year he addressed the Assembly: "An act of this Assembly made and passed this twelve months ordered the title *HIS EXCELLENCY* to be given the Governor of this State. This savouring too much of High Titles, and not beneficial, may it not honourably be repealed? It passed without previous knowledge, expectation or desire. Asking pardon from you and my successors, I do sincerely request its repeal. It is Honor and Happiness enough to meet the Approbation of Heaven, of my conscience, and of my Brethren." Then he adds: "High sounding Titles intoxicate the mind, ingenerate envy, breed disorders in a commonwealth, and ought to be avoided. The true grandeur and solid glory do not consist in high Titles, splendour, pomp, and magnificence, nor in reverence and exterior honor paid to their Governors, and Rulers, but in the real and solid advantages derived therefrom."

Connecticut's exposed shore with its numerous towns offered an open invitation to British ships to raid and plunder. Trumbull met the challenge with as motley a collection of ships of all kinds as ever made up a navy. Some of them were little more than fishing smacks armed with small guns, but they rendered an excellent account for themselves taking many valued prizes and causing consternation to the British navy. These little boats would slip alongside a British vessel, under cover of darkness, cause immense damage and be gone before the British were aware of them. The prizes won helped very materially to support the war effort and to compensate Governor Trumbull, who, only twice, received his small stipend from the State. Probably he was dependent upon that prize money to sustain himself.

The quiet little town of Lebanon became the scene of much color and animation when the French troops under Count Lauzun camped upon the Common. That individual wrote home, "Siberia alone can be compared to Lebanon, which is only composed of cabins scattered through immense forests." It must have been a decided contrast to the ways of Paris, of the Trianon, of kissing the hand of the Pompadour, of the French aristocracy. It is said that the Count upon his return to France was wont to mimic the long prayer of grace with which the governor prefaced each meal. But the Count lost his head in the French Revolution while Trumbull lived to a ripe old age. Perhaps his loathing of titles was deepened by his experiences with French nobility.



Space does not permit a detailed account of the intense activity of Trumbull during these years of war. He must have been a man of superb strength, but he was also sustained by an indomitable conviction of the rightness of the cause and the fact that God was sustaining him. In every letter to Washington he would refer to the power of the Almighty to help in every emergency. An ordinary man would have broken under the stupendous load he carried.

At the age of seventy-three he sent a long address to the General Assembly expressing his desire to retire from further public service. He longed to return to the quiet life of Lebanon, there to seek to rebuild his ruined business, to pursue his studies in theology, an interest he had never given up, and to enjoy a well earned rest. He was a careful student of Hebrew. After his retirement he did write many sermons which he sent to President Stiles of Yale for his criticism. He was by nature a scholar. Both the University of Edinburgh and Yale honored themselves as well as Governor Trumbull by granting him honorary degrees.

Governor Trumbull died on August 17, 1785. His death brought letters of condolence from many famous leaders of the new nation who had worked with him. President Washington wrote in part: "A long and well-spent life in the service of his country places Governor Trumbull among the first of patriots. In the social studies he yielded to no one; and his lamp, from the common course of nature, being nearly extinguished, worn down with age and cares, yet retaining his mental faculties in perfection, are blessings which rarely attend advanced life. All these combined have secured to his memory unusual respect and love here, and, no doubt, unmeasurable happiness hereafter."

## Chapter 5

### JOHN TRUMBULL: PATRIOT, ARTIST, ARCHITECT

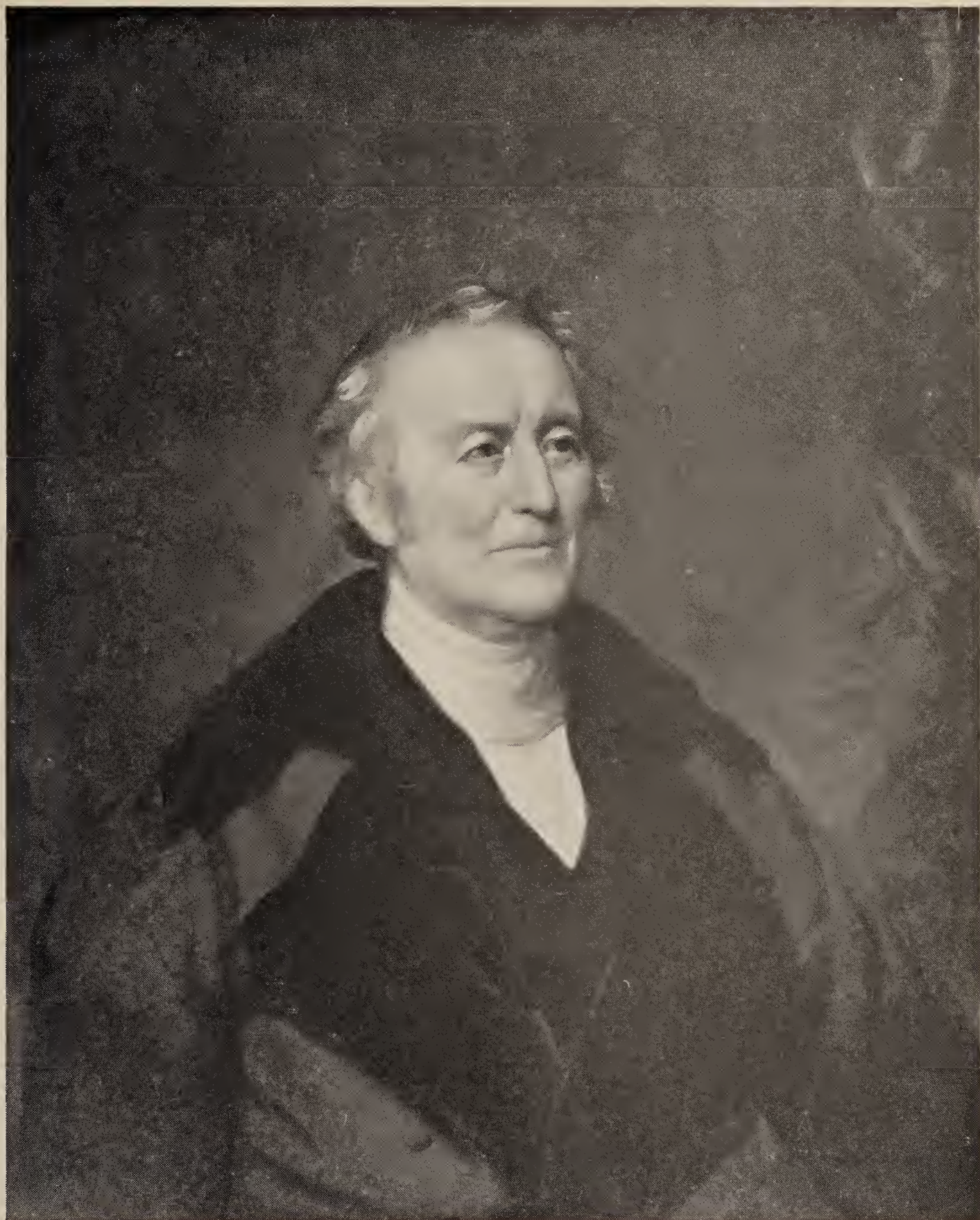
Of all the members of the famed family of Jonathan Trumbull, the youngest of them, John, born June 6, 1756, is, in many respects, the most interesting, not because of his fame as a patriot, an artist and an architect, but because of his personality, so different from his rather staid, Puritanical father.

A man's reminiscences of his own life may prove to be more self-revealing than he thinks. He either over-rates himself or under-rates himself. Can a man be a fair judge of his own abilities and achievements? John Trumbull's autobiography, written very late in life, is at least interesting as a portrayal of his estimate of himself.

Soon after his birth John was the victim of increasingly violent convulsions, the cause of which could not be determined by the local doctors. A physician friend from another town declared that the convulsions were due to the overlapping of the bones of the skull causing pressure upon the brain. The only possible cure was a patient attempt to draw apart the bones by gentle pressure until they fitted into their proper places. This John's mother did with untiring care and with ultimate success, a success which John, eighty-five years later, attributed to Divine providence in making known the cause of the disease, and to the affectionate and patient care of his mother.

The boy was more or less pampered by his parents and his brothers and sisters. He was not robust, could not participate in the normal sports of the youth of that day, due mostly to an accident at the age of nine when he had a serious fall which, it was found later, had cost him the use of one eye. A modern psychologist might deduce from these experiences some of the reasons for the eccentricities of the man.





*Courtesy of Yale University Art Gallery*

PORTRAIT OF JOHN TRUMBULL  
by Waldo and Jewell







*Photo by James Sherman Pitkin*

## THE HIGH PULPIT AND PALLADIAN WINDOW







The impressions made upon a child's mind are well illustrated by an experience of this young boy. He had heard a Jews-harp for the first time. Ever after, even after having heard the best music in London and Paris, there was a magic charm about a Jews-harp which he could never forget.

John's schooling followed the usual course of his day. He was enrolled in the school of Master Nathan Tisdale, for whom he had a high regard and in which, later, he was to teach for a short time. There at the age of six he excelled in Greek. At the age of twelve he was ready for college having read Eutropious, Virgil, Cicero, Horace, and Juvenal, among the Latin authors; the Greek New Testament, Homer's Iliad, and other Greek writers, in addition to the other studies required such as geography, history, and arithmetic. He evidently inherited his father's proficiency in the languages. At length, at the age of fifteen, Master Tisdale said he could teach him little more. He entered Harvard with advance credits placing him in the middle of the Junior year.

John's artistic sense was awakened early by his attempt to imitate some drawings and paintings of his eldest sister, Faith, upon the white sand which served in the place of carpets on the floors of the parental home. He did not claim for himself a natural genius, saying only that his taste for an artist's life clearly came from mere imitation. For some years his major efforts were in copying the works of other artists rather than doing creative things for himself.

John tried to persuade his father to let him study art under Mr. Copley, then in Boston, instead of entering Harvard, but his practical minded father could see no future in such a course. Later John tried to point out to him the fame of Athens. His father's laconic remark was, "but Connecticut is not Athens."

His proficiency in his earlier studies, however, made the work at college extremely easy. He found time to study French on the side with a French family living in Boston. He searched the library for whatever works there might be on art or relating to art. There he found Hogarth's "Analysis of Beauty", a book which gave him much of value. When he came to paint a self-portrait, he pictured himself with his arm resting on this volume. He also found many engravings and some paintings. Some of these he copied even adding oils to the engravings.

In due time he graduated from Harvard and returned home where he continued copying and coloring engravings. Then, as stated, Master Tisdale having suffered a stroke of paralysis, John took over the school for the winter. The storm clouds of war were gathering. The young man was in the very midst of an intensely patriotic town and family. He sought for himself all the military information he could find, formed a small company of young men, and practiced marching, musketry, and military movements. Some of these youthful soldiers became distinguished military leaders later.

John's father was not satisfied with his son's ambition in life. He wanted him to study for the ministry or at least for the law. Neither appealed to the young man. His father, thinking perhaps to divert his mind and turn him into other channels, suggested that he sketch a map of the Susquehannah lands which supposedly belonged to Connecticut and in which his father had a lively interest. This task of cartographer gave John a chance to do more than make a map; he embellished it with all sorts of fanciful designs, and he evidently enjoyed the task. It led him later to make some maps of the British lines around Boston. These were brought to the attention of General Washington who was impressed enough to make him an aide on his staff with the rank of brigade major. Later John became adjutant to General Gates. Here again his skill in map making produced an excellent drawing of the Lake George and Lake Champlain areas of conflict.

On the 22nd of February, 1777, John terminated his regular military career over what seems to have been a trivial matter. He was then at Providence. He had been appointed deputy adjutant general in the northern department by General Gates, an appointment which Gates evidently had the power to make but which had to be ratified later by Congress. It was ratified under the date of the receipt of the dispatch from General Gates, September 12, whereas the original appointment had been made on June 28. John felt insulted that the formal commission from Congress did not bear the latter date, and therefore returned it. He did some valued volunteer service later but never under formal appointment or commission. There can be no question as to the courage of the young man. He risked his life carrying dispatches through the thick of battle in such a way as to win the acclaim that he led a charmed life. Was it the temperamental nature of the artist or



the supersensitiveness of a man accustomed in his childhood to being pampered that caused him to resent so bitterly a matter of such trivial consequence?

Having resigned his commission John finally went to Boston where he pursued his work as an artist copying some celebrated pictures which he found in the old studio of Mr. Smibert, an artist of an earlier day. He interrupted this work long enough to volunteer for participation in an expected battle at Newport, where it was that he distinguished himself by his courage as a dispatch rider.

Then came the decision to go to London to study under Mr. West. Influential friends paved the way for him. Lord George Germaine, the British secretary of state, granted him permission, but warned him that he would be under the constant eye of the government and that he must use every discretion.

Arriving in London John took up his studies as planned. He assiduously refrained from compromising his position in any way. The treason of Benedict Arnold and the death of the British spy, Major Andre, soon stirred up considerable feeling against the son of the governor of Connecticut, upon whose head the British had placed a price. The loyalists in London were looking for revenge and thought they could find it in John Trumbull. They soon had him in jail, and had it not been for the intervention of Mr. Burke, he might have suffered the extreme penalty. His imprisonment was not unbearable. He was provided with materials to carry on his work as an artist and thus while away the time. One suggestion, however, which bore fruit of particular interest to the people of Lebanon, was that he take up the study of architecture, for the new country would be much in need of architects. Just how much he did in the way of such a study is uncertain but, whether then or later, he did enough to qualify him for some respect in that field, enough so that it is evident today that had he followed that profession he would have attained fame in it.

While still in London, and while visiting the Continent, he projected the idea of a series of great paintings depicting outstanding events of the American Revolution. He had outlined his picture of the Signing of the Declaration of Independence. He took every opportunity to paint the portraits of the signers as he had opportunity. He found Jefferson in Paris in 1787 and secured his portrait there. Later he was to travel much through the states hunting

out other signers. Thus the portraits in the finished picture were taken from original sittings for the most part.

John Trumbull's purpose in painting these great scenes was not wholly mercenary, if we can take his word for it. He says in his "Reminiscences": "I am fully sensible that the profession, as it is generally practiced, is frivolous, little useful to society, and unworthy of a man who has talents for more serious pursuits. (Was this a throwback from his father?) But, to preserve and diffuse the memory of the noblest series of actions which have ever presented themselves in the history of man; to give to the present and the future sons of oppression and misfortune, such glorious lessons of their rights, and of the spirit with which they should assert and support them, and even to transmit to their descendants, the personal resemblance of those who have been the great actors in those glorious scenes, were objects which gave dignity to the profession, peculiar to my situation. And some superiority also arose from my having born personally a humble part in the great events which I was to describe. No one lives with me possessing this advantage, and no one can come after me to divide the honor of truth and authenticity, however easily I may hereafter be exceeded in elegance. Vanity was thus on the side of duty, and I flatter myself that by devoting a few years of life to this object, I did not make an absolute waste of time, or squander uselessly, talents from which my country might justly demand more valuable services; and I feel some honest pride in the prospect of accomplishing a work, such as had never been done before, and in which it was not easy that I should have a rival."

Congress commissioned him to execute four paintings at eight thousand dollars each. Trumbull's desire was to paint eight in order to cover what he considered the major events, but four was the limit. Trumbull took his task most seriously. He debated long with Bulfinch as to the gallery in which the pictures were to be hung, the lighting, the stairs, the ventilation. He made suggestions to Bulfinch which saved for the Capitol its noble dome which at one time was threatened. No detail escaped him. He showed some true genius as an architect as well as an artist as he debated the plans for the Capitol.

Probably, however, the best work that Trumbull did was not in his massive paintings, but in the delightful miniatures, many of which are in the Trumbull Room of the Yale University Art Gal-





*(Courtesy of Yale University Art Gallery)*

“THE SIGNING of the DECLARATION OF INDEPENDENCE”  
Painting by John Trumbull





lery. The delicate detail of these little gems avoids the faults of the broader scope of his larger works. Perhaps, as TheodoreSizer suggests, the lack of the use of one eye accounts for a part of the difficulties involved in the perspective of the broad canvass.

Of Trumbull's architectural work little remains. TheodoreSizer has made an important contribution towards an understanding of this side of the many-sided Trumbull in an article entitled, "John Trumbull, Amateur Architect", printed in the "Journal of the Society of Architectural Historians". He relates that while Trumbull was in Philadelphia in 1792, he was approached by James Hillhouse, Treasurer of Yale, about a new plan for the college buildings. This plan met with the favor of Mr. Hillhouse, who forwarded it to President Ezra Stiles with a commendatory letter. On the margin of the plans Trumbull wrote: "On the whole I trust that the Corporation will meditate a time — not, far distant — when New Haven shall become another Oxford, & will make their present decisions with a View to future Embellishment: — anticipating that happy Period, when the *Arts of Peace* shall succeed in the Esteem of the World, to those of Devastation, which have so long engrossed the Applause of . . . " (balance torn off). Is there a touch of humor in the otherwise serious man when he adds another note? "The Temples of Cloacina — which it is too much the custom of New England to place conspicuously — I would wish to have concealed as much as possible, by planting a variety of Shrubs, such as Laburnums, Liliacs, Roses, Snowballs, Laurels, & & — a gravel walk should lead thro the Shrubbery to these buildings . . ."

Aside from his interest in the Capitol in Washington for which he made some very practical suggestions, he designed the original New York Academy of Fine Arts, and the Art Museum at Yale. This latter building was erected in 1831. In 1868 a new and larger building was erected, the old one being converted into an office for the treasurer of the college. Finally it was torn down in 1901 to make room for other buildings.

The old Meeting House in Lebanon, Trumbull's native town, is the sole surviving specimen of his work and genius as an architect. He started the building in 1804. It was dedicated in 1807. The Meeting House shows the influence of John Trumbull's study of the churches in London, especially that of St. Martin-in-the-Field, the work of Gibbs. An unusual feature in the Lebanon Meeting House is to be seen in the four Doric columns of moulded brick

on the facade. These are painted white in contrast to the red of the brick structure. As related elsewhere, the Meeting House has been restored to the original plans of John Trumbull, all except the splendid steeple which still awaits the funds for that project.

Financial difficulties in the latter years of Trumbull's life caused him to conceive the idea of turning over to Yale all his work still in his possession, in return for which he was to receive an annuity of a thousand dollars a year during his life-time. His nephew-in-law, Professor Benjamin Silliman, helped to put the idea across. Involved in the contract was the construction of what Trumbull called his "Pinacotheca", or art gallery, in the basement of which was to be housed the mineral collection of Professor Silliman. Yale was to find out, as many other institutions have, that a man's life expectancy may run far beyond all ordinary calculations. It did in Trumbull's case. Nevertheless Yale can take pride in the fact of having one of the oldest art museums in the English-speaking world.

Trumbull made another condition. He and his wife were to be buried beneath his Gallery directly below his portrait of General Washington. When the original building was outgrown and a larger one built, the remains of the couple were transferred to the new building. Thus this man, of all the Trumbulls, has a monument over his crypt worthy of his fame, certainly far more stately than the earth-covered vault in which rest the remains of Jonathan Trumbull, William Williams, and so many others of fame.

Nothing but a full length volume could do justice to the many faceted life of John Trumbull. His work as a secretary to John Hay, as a member of the board of commissioners to act as agent for the relief of American seamen by appointment of Timothy Pickering, then Secretary of State, his many business ventures, most of which failed, his interest in the course of the French Revolution, are all part of a fascinating story of a man interested in life. Nothing seemed to escape that interest. At one time he drew up a long memorandum on the subject of uniforms for fighting men, rather sane and logical, in which he sought the comfort and convenience of the men rather than gorgeous outfits good only for men on parade. He riddled a plan of President Jefferson for a fleet of small gunboats instead of ships equipped with eighty guns so effectively as to kill it.

In the long catalogue of John Trumbull's work one is struck with the number of religious subjects which he copied from the



masters. Was this an evidence of an inner religious life inherited from his parents but which is not particularly emphasized in his autobiography? Perhaps so. It would be strange indeed if he did not manifest a deep interest in religion with the background of his parental home. We know his violent reactions to the wild excesses of the French Revolution and the desecration of the churches and cathedrals in the Age of Reason.

John Trumbull says little about his wife. Professor Sizer says that she was socially unacceptable. Apparently she was some years younger than he. He writes of her after her death: "She was the perfect personification of truth and sincerity — wise to counsel, kind to console — by far the more important and better *moral* half of me, and withal, beautiful beyond the usual beauty of women!" Perhaps that was tribute enough, but one would like to know more about her life with the unpredictable John, a man who was constantly on the go. She died at the age of fifty-one, April 12, 1824. John lived until November 10, 1843, in his eighty-seventh year. The couple had no children.

Lebanon may well be proud to have had as one of her native sons John Trumbull, and to possess the beautiful example of his sense of proportion and beauty in the Meeting House, the work of his brains and hands.

## Chapter 6

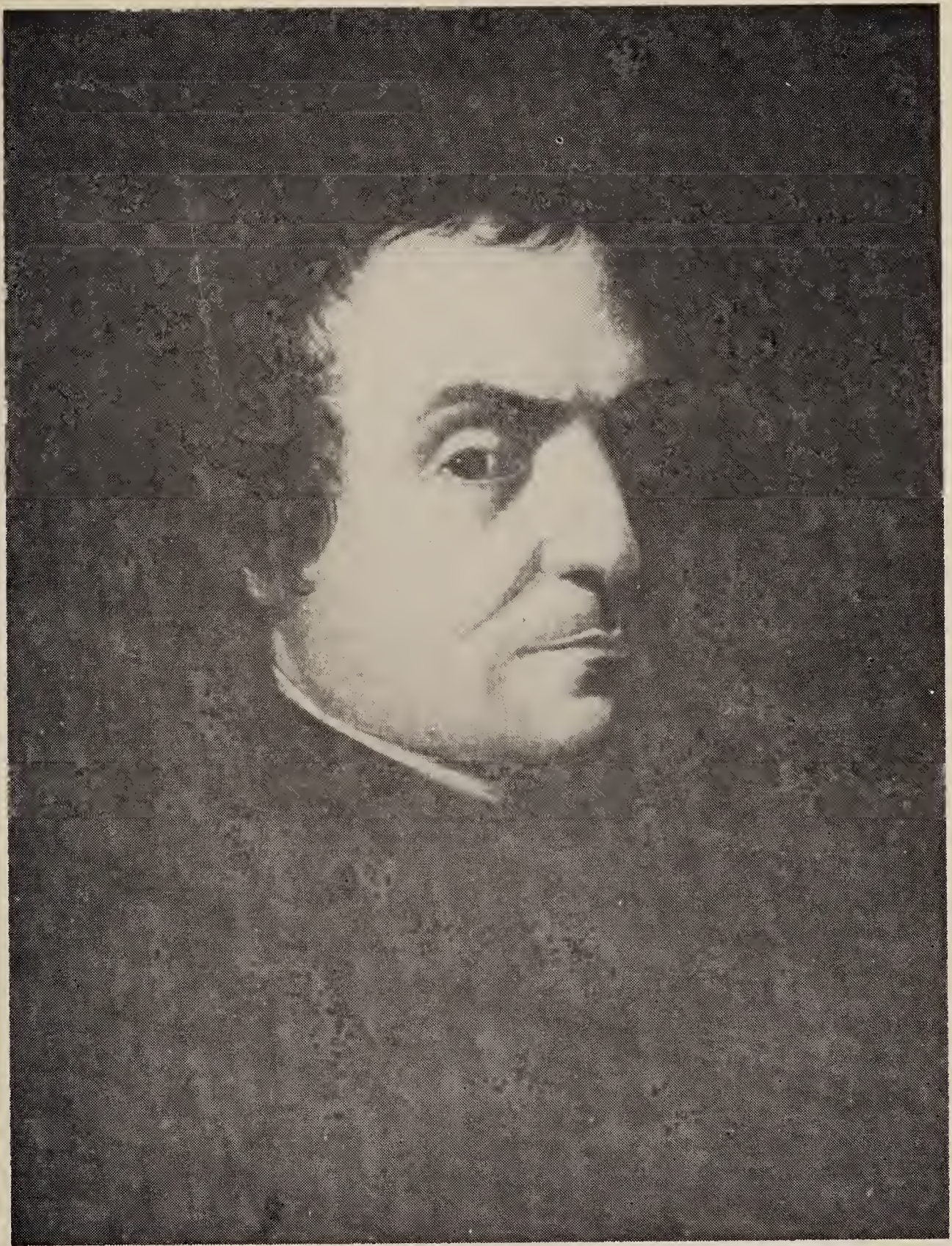
### WILLIAM WILLIAMS: SIGNER OF THE DECLARATION OF INDEPENDENCE

One of the most intense patriots among many in Lebanon in the days of the American Revolution was William Williams, and rightly so. His father, Dr. Solomon Williams, was a staunch champion of the liberties of the colonists in a day when there were many clergymen who were more than lukewarm, some of whom, as with the Rev. Mr. Peters of the neighboring town of Hebron, had to flee back to England because of their loyalist views. And there were the Trumbulls! And there was Nathan Tisdale who taught patriotism as well as Greek and Latin and the other subjects which his students had to take! Lebanon was no place for other than patriotic men and women.

William Williams, as his name would indicate, came from Welsh background, the fifth generation from Robert Williams, who came to Roxbury in the early seventeenth century. His grandfather, William Williams, a graduate of Harvard, was pastor for fifty-six years of the Congregational Church of Hatfield, Massachusetts. His father, Solomon Williams, a graduate from Harvard in 1719, was settled over the parish in Lebanon, Connecticut, where he served until his death, ministering to the people for fifty-four years, honored by Yale and by his fellow ministers. Solomon Williams married Mary Porter, the daughter of Judge Samuel and Joanna Porter, of Hadley, Massachusetts.

William Williams was born in Lebanon, April 8, 1731, one of eight children, five sons and three daughters. The father, a well educated man himself, in whose home many of the promising youth





*(Courtesy of Dr. George E. McClellan)*

WILLIAM WILLIAMS

Portrait by John Trumbull







of the town studied until the Nathan Tisdale School was established, saw to it that each of the sons received a good education. William attended the Nathan Tisdale School where he was adequately prepared for college. At the age of sixteen he entered Harvard where he was an excellent student, graduating with honors. Two years later he was given an honorary degree by Yale.

Upon graduation he returned to Lebanon where he began the study of theology with his father, who conducted almost a one-man theological seminary in his home, many coming to study under him. He had an ample library, was a thorough scholar and a good instructor.

Though William was a good student, especially fond of Greek and Latin, which he was proficient in even in his old age, his interests were directed elsewhere. The French-Indian War called for men and he responded. He was placed on the staff of his cousin, Colonial Ephraim Williams, under the command of Major General Johnson, later Sir William. His cousin was killed in the battle of Lake George. William returned from that battle with a low regard for the British officers and a feeling that the colonists could expect no peace or security if they depended upon men of that calibre who looked upon the American officer and soldier as inferiors. Governor Trumbull, too, was greatly disturbed that Connecticut's own General Lyman, who really won the battle, should have been passed over, while Sir William won added honors which he did not deserve.

When William returned to Lebanon he did not resume his studies of theology but embarked upon a career as a merchant and in the field of politics, mostly the latter. His first office was that of town clerk and town treasurer of Lebanon. He held this position for forty-four years. When only twenty-five, he was elected a representative from Lebanon to the General Assembly. That he had the respect of the town is evidenced by the fact that he was re-elected to represent them at Hartford during the years 1757 to 1761, 1763 to 1776, and 1780 to 1784. He was elected Speaker of the House for nine sessions, and Clerk of the House for seventeen sessions. There were nearly ninety sessions of the House during his membership in the General Assembly. His attendance record was nearly perfect with the exception of the time that he spent at the Continental Congress. He served on many important special commissions and committees.

In 1776 he was appointed judge of the Windham County Court, a position he held until 1804. None of his decisions were ever over-ruled by a higher court. He also served as Judge of Probate for the Windham district during the years 1776 to 1808. From 1761 to 1785 he held the position of First Selectman for the town of Lebanon.

The Trumbull and the Williams families were united by the marriage of William to Mary Trumbull, second daughter of Governor Trumbull, on February 14, 1771. Undoubtedly both the honored governor and the esteemed pastor were pleased for both had a profound respect for each other, and both were extremely influential, not alone in Lebanon, but throughout the colony of Connecticut. Governor Trumbull certainly had no more ardent supporter in every way than his son-in-law, William Williams.

The marriage of these two young people was a happy one. Mary had lived in the atmosphere of a strong patriotism in her own home. She and William would be in accord on the momentous questions of the day. Of this union there resulted three children, Solomon, Faith, and William. To them William Williams gave deep affection and saw to it that they had the best education to be obtained.

The outbreak of the American Revolution called forth from William Williams a full and whole-hearted devotion to the cause. He gave up his business pursuits to devote all his time to the cause of his country. Nothing was held back. Like his father-in-law, Governor Trumbull, every waking hour was devoted to the tasks at hand. Blankets were needed. The only way to get them was through private contributions. William Williams forwarded at one time one thousand blankets collected from a town with less than four thousand population. He also collected money, food, lead weights from clocks for bullets, and whatever else was needed.

In 1775 he was appointed to the Council of Safety which he served as clerk during its entire existence. His fiery spirit is well illustrated by a reported conversation between himself and Benjamin Huntington. The talk turned to the fate of those who were openly opposed to the British policies if the British should ever lay hands on them. Huntington said, "I am in no danger of being hung, for I have neither signed the Declaration nor written anything against the British government." Williams vehemently came back with the rejoinder, "Then, sir, you deserve to be hung for not having done your duty."



William Williams did not see much active military service at the front although in 1773 he was appointed Colonel of the Twelfth Regiment of Militia, a force of about seventeen hundred men. He served in this capacity until 1776 when he resigned to accept a seat in the Continental Congress. His regiment was in able hands while he was needed for his talents in other fields.

In October, 1775, when a Continental Congress had been finally established, William Williams was chosen as an alternate. The following year, one of the Connecticut delegates, Oliver Wolcott, was taken ill and William Williams was sent to replace him at Philadelphia. The debates were long and furious. Progress was slow, much too slow for a man of the spirit of William Williams. He wrote: "We make slow Progress in (the Confederation) as every inch of Ground is disputed, and very jarring Claims and interests are to be adjusted among us, and then all to be agreed to by several Legislatures, so that between both, I almost Despair of seeing it accomplished." A few days later he wrote, "it seems to labour hard, and I fear a more permanent one will never be settled." It *was* hard reconciling the conflicting interests of thirteen colonies. It was later written of him, "At Continental Congress he was ever ready to go as far as anyone to obtain the liberation of his suffering country from the serpentine coils of tyranny. He was in favor of bold and vigorous measures and advocated the Declaration of Independence from its incipient conception to its final adoption. He was greatly instrumental in dispelling the doubts of many whose motives and desires were as pure but whose moral courage was less than his. He was well versed in the different forms of government, international law and the routine of legislation. When he spoke in public he was listened to with profound attention. When the final vote on the Declaration of Independence was taken he responded with a thundering AYE which signified his boldness and his zeal."

There was criticism of Colonel Williams when he resigned his commission but it was not justified. He felt his responsibilities elsewhere were of more importance and that his best service could be rendered in them. There could be no justification in the feeling that he lacked the courage to go into battle. When word came that the traitor, Benedict Arnold, was going to raid New London, Williams mounted his horse, rode the twenty-three miles in three hours, and volunteered his services. He joined up with Captain

John Morgan's company under Colonel Oliver Smith and marched against the British.

Among the giants molding the life of a new nation, William Williams held his own, doing a work greatly needed, speaking the word to inspire, writing the word to urge others on. The contribution he made is not easily measured in terms of heroic acts; the measurement must be made in terms of directive influence that sustained the more heroic but not more important task of those who laid the sure foundations of an enduring nation.

The people of Lebanon were, then as now, conservative. They were opposed to the adoption by the State of Connecticut of the proposed Federal Constitution. Nevertheless they elected William Williams to the state convention where the Constitution was debated. Governor Trumbull had strongly supported it. Much of his correspondence with George Washington dealt with the need of a national sovereignty. William Williams undoubtedly discussed the question at length with his father-in-law. He voted for the ratification, not, however, because of his father-in-law, but because of his own convictions. He was far too independent in his own thinking to be controlled by any man. He thought his own way through to his own conclusions, and his thinking was clear.

Upon William Williams devolved the responsibility of securing supplies from Connecticut to be forwarded to the men at the front. During 1777 he sent, out of his own resources, beef, pork, and gold to the men who were enduring the rigors of Valley Forge. A friend asked him if he had received his pay for all this. He replied, "If independence should be established, he should get his pay, if not, the loss would be of no account to him." The paper money of the colonies had little or no value. Men would not serve for pay in the paper money that wasn't "worth a Continental". He secured over two thousand dollars in hard cash and forwarded it. He never was reimbursed for this but he never begrudged his loss for it was, to him, a loss in a good cause. In fact, his whole personal fortune was expended for his country. Many were debtors to him but he never enforced payments where he knew it would mean suffering.

An eloquent, fiery speaker, he toured the colony urging loyalty to the cause, enlisting recruits for the army. It is believed that he composed many of the state papers of his busy father-in-law, Governor Trumbull. He was a constant writer to the various journals and magazines of the day. His own home was always open to sol-





*(Courtesy of Connecticut Circle)*

Home of Governor Trumbull's son-in-law  
**WILLIAM WILLIAMS**  
Signer of Declaration of Independence

The son-in-law of Governor Trumbull, William Williams, went to Philadelphia and was one of the four Connecticut signers of the Declaration of Independence, the others being Samuel Huntington, Roger Sherman and Oliver Wolcott. William Williams was a great patriot, giving of his time inexhaustively. At one period he had just gathered one thousand blankets from some 4000 homes and he was asked what he expected to gain from it. He advised in his own words that he expected to gain liberty, that if he did not "it wouldn't matter" as he would be hung.

*(From Connecticut Circle)*



This is one of the famous Lauzun Huzzars, one of the best-known horse troops of the French. With the French fleet at Newport, General Rochambeau sought from Governor Trumbull in the fall of 1780 winter quarters for his troops. Arrangements were made for the famed corps of the Duke de Lauzun Legion of Horse to be housed at Lebanon. He had found difficulty in finding a certainty of food and fuel anywhere else and knew that under Governor Trumbull's auspices he was assured of proper care being given to this celebrated corps. Although portions of the French forces were allocated originally to other Connecticut towns, eventually most of them were at Lebanon for a seven-months period to June, from whence they marched to join Washington's forces, attack Cornwallis at Yorktown 1000 miles away and assist in forcing the surrender of the English Army.

*(From Connecticut Circle)*



*(Courtesy of Connecticut Circle)*

Lauzun Huzzars  
At Lebanon, Winter of 1780-81



diers. He turned his home over to the officers of the French Legion when Count Lauzun's troops were camped on the common.

Ripe in years, William Williams retired from public life in 1804. Deafness deprived him of the joys of conversation. He spent much time in reading, in meditation, in prayer. A fitting tribute has been paid him in the words: "He was a fine figure of middle size, dark complexion and hair, piercing black eyes, aquiline nose, an open and ingenious countenance, a stentorian voice and strong physical powers. He was blessed with a clear head, a noble heart, a sound judgment, an acute perception, and a logical mind. Not a blot could be found upon the fair fame of his public or private character."

Another says of him: "During his entire life he possessed a redundancy of spirit and vehemence of expression which frequently created in himself strong and sorrowful feelings. On ordinary occasions he was taciturn and reserved. He was habitually involved in deep thinking, and when his decision was formed, he was of tenacious opinion."

One would naturally expect that, with his family background, William Williams would be a man of deep religious convictions. Religion to him was a reality; God was an actual force in private and public life. During the Revolution he wrote to his father-in-law: "These Events, however signal advantage gained by our oppressors, and the distress to which our Army and Country are and must be subjected in consequence of them, are loud speaking Testimonies of the Displeasure and Anger of Almighty God against a sinful people, Louder than Sevenfold Thunder. Is it possible that the most obdurate and stupid of the Children of America should not hear and tremble?"

Coupled, however, with this feeling, was a confidence in God's overruling providence. It gave him assurance that whatever the results of the conflict, the will of God would triumph.

While still a youth he was elected a deacon in his home church, a position he held for forty years. His religion was not a matter of outward form but of inner conviction. He lived his faith.

The death of his eldest son, Solomon Williams, was a great blow to the aging man. His health continued to decline until he finally lapsed into a coma which lasted three days, but on the fourth day he called for his departed son to attend him on his journey into the world beyond. He died, August 2, 1811, in the eighty-first

year of his life. Rev. Zebulon Ely, successor to Dr. Solomon Williams as pastor of the Lebanon church, preached the funeral sermon. He said of his honored parishioner: "He revered the sanctuary, greatly honored divine ordinances, and till within a few weeks before his death, though seemingly unable, constantly attended public worship. At length the time that infinite Wisdom had fixed being come, he gave up the ghost and died in a good old age, an old man and full of years; and wast gathered to his people. The stores of nature being exhausted, he died as calmly as one would fall asleep, in the 81st year of his age."

Thus passed the last surviving member of the Connecticut signers of the Declaration of Independence. He was buried in the Trumbull tomb in the Old Cemetery. In front of the tomb is a marble monument upon which is the following inscription:

"The remains of the Hon. William Williams are deposited in this tomb: born April 8th, 1731: died the 2d of Aug., 1811, in the 81st year of his age, a man eminent for his virtues and his piety — for more than fifty years he was constantly employed in Public Life, and served in many of the most important offices in the gift of his fellow citizens. During the whole period of the Revolutionary War, he was a firm, steady, and ardent friend of his country, and in the darkest times risked his life and wealth in her defense. In 1776 and 1777, he was a Member of the American Congress, and as such signed the Declaration of Independence. His public and private virtues, his piety, and benevolence will long endear his memory to surviving friends — above all, he was a sincere Christian, and in his last moments placed his hope with humble confidence in his Redeemer. He had the inexpressible satisfaction to look back upon a long, honorable, and well-spent life."



## Chapter 7

### DR. WILLIAM BEAUMONT

*"Backwoods Physiologist"*

At the northerly end of the Lebanon Green stands a boulder with a bronze plaque which reads:

In that part of Lebanon known as "Village Hill"  
some three miles from this spot on the road leading from  
Lebanon to Willimantic was born Nov. 21, 1785

### DR. WILLIAM BEAUMONT

a surgeon in the United States army who later became illustrious as a pioneer investigator of the physiology of digestion through his painstaking and valuable observations continued throughout many years and largely at his own costs upon the person of Alexis St. Martin who recovered under the skilful treatment of Dr. Beaumont from a severe gunshot wound of the abdomen which healed with a permanent gastric fistula. In appreciation of his valuable services to science and to humanity this tablet has been placed here by

### THE BEAUMONT MEDICAL CLUB

Among the illustrious names that mark the history of Lebanon none should shine with more lustre than that of Dr. William Beaumont, yet few think of him when telling the glories of the town. Many memorials may be found in his honor elsewhere, including a monument in northern Michigan near the spot where he started his experiments, his grave in St. Louis, where he practiced after

leaving the army, and the Beaumont Medical Club, an organization devoted to the study of the history of medicine in the past and in the lives of those who have contributed to progress in the field of medicine. This organization chose for its name that of the first pioneer physiologist in America.

The boulder itself came from the farm of Philip Krause, the original birthplace of Dr. Beaumont. When Mr. Krause was asked for permission for the members of the Beaumont Medical Club to choose a boulder for this purpose, he offered to give them all the boulders on the farm, but the members felt that would mean a monument greater than the great Pyramid.

Notable men gathered for the unveiling of the plaque. The Surgeon General of the United States Army sent a personal representative. Delegates were present from the American Medical Association. Yale University was well represented by Dr. Leonard Woolsey Bacon, who served as chairman of the committee to erect a suitable memorial. Dr. Bacon was related to Dr. Beaumont through his mother's family.

Who was this man and what of his story? William Beaumont was born in Lebanon, as stated on the plaque, November 21, 1785. His father was a successful farmer, an active politician of the Jeffersonian school, a man noted for his integrity and industry. William was his third son. He was a boy of independent spirit and with a love for adventure. At the age of twenty-two he left the farm to make his own way in life. He took with him a horse and cutter, a barrel of cider, and one hundred dollars of hard-earned money. From a paper, evidently written by his son, comes the tribute, "With this he started, laying his course northwardly, without any particular destination, Honor his rule of action, Truth his only landmark, and Trust placed implicitly in Heaven." Finally arriving at Champlain, New York, he secured a position teaching the local school which he did for two years. He spent his spare time reading medical books from the library of a local doctor. Later he went to St. Albans to study in the office of the doctor there, a course which he followed for two years.

In 1812 came the war with England. Young William sought an appointment in the United States Army, was assigned to the Sixth Infantry as assistant surgeon, and joined his regiment at Plattsburgh on the thirteenth of September, 1812. Then followed various expeditions involving conflicts with the English and their



Indian allies. He gained much experience caring for the wounded in a day when the suffering was almost intolerable, no anesthetics, no blood plasma, none of the modern techniques which have saved so large a percentage of wounded men in the last great war. One day's item gives a vivid picture of his busy life as an army surgeon on active duty. "Dressed upwards of fifty patients — from simple contusions to the worst of compound fractures — more than half the latter. Performed two cases of amputation and one of trepanning. At twelve p.m. retired to rest my fatigued body and mind."

Sir William Osler, in his splended preface to the reprint of Beaumont's journal, gives the following dates of Beaumont's commissions: Surgeon's Mate, Sixth Regiment of Infantry, December 2, 1812; Cavalry, March 27, 1819; Post Surgeon, December 4, 1819; Surgeon of First Regiment and Surgeon, November 6, 1826.

After leaving the army Dr. Beaumont settled down to the life of a hard-working general practitioner in St. Louis, Missouri, then a rapidly growing frontier town. He had a large practice in which he was assisted by a younger man. He himself wrote that he declined more practice daily than half the doctors in the city got in a week. He continued his practice until he was nearly eighty years of age, still full of the zest for life. In March, 1853, he had a fall which eventually caused his death on April 25. A contemporary who knew him well wrote the following tribute:

"He was gifted with strong natural powers, which, working upon an extensive experience in life, resulted in a species of natural sagacity, which, I suppose, was something peculiar in him, and not to be attained by any course of study. His temperament was ardent, but never got the better of his instructed and disciplined judgment, and whenever and however employed, he ever adopted the most judicious means of attaining ends that were honorable. In the sick room, he was a model of patience and kindness, his intuitive perceptions, guiding a pure benevolence, never failed to inspire confidence, and thus he belonged to that class of physicians whose very presence affords Nature a sensible relief." Sir William Osler quoted these words in an address on Dr. William Beaumont in the city of St. Louis in 1902. The occasion honored, not so much the general practitioner of the city, but the "backwoods physiologist" whose sagacity and insight had done so much for the advancement of medical knowledge.

What was it that he did? The story is one of unselfish devotion to the study of a then little known function, that of the processes of digestion, and especially the functions of the gastric juice. The incident giving this young man his opportunity was one which not all men would have been quick to seize upon. It involved years of patient research, tabulation, even financial sacrifice. It is the story of opportunity knocking at a young man's door and the young man having the wisdom to recognize his opportunity. He was not one of the "great" working in a highly equipped laboratory, only a rather insignificant army surgeon, poorly equipped, but ready when his chance came.

On June 6, 1822, Dr. Beaumont was stationed with the United States troops at the Island of Michilimacinae where the waters of Lake Michigan and Lake Huron meet. The troops were occupied keeping the Indians in check and patrolling the border of the frontier. Trappers and hunters made the place a center for trade. In the company's store a young French Canadian, Alexis St. Martin, was standing when a shot gun was accidentally discharged, the whole charge entering St. Martin's body. He was standing not more than three feet from the gun. His body took, not only the shot, but the wadding as well. His clothing caught on fire. He fell, supposedly dead.

Within a few minutes Dr. Beaumont, the army surgeon, was by his side. He extracted as much of the shot as he could, together with pieces of wadding and clothing, and dressed the wound. He believed the man would not live more than thirty-six hours at the most. In two or three hours he returned to find the man doing much better than he had dared hope. The next day he worked over the man, getting out more shot and bits of cloth and wadding, and dressing the edges of the wound. He then expressed the belief that the man would recover.

Dr. Beaumont's own description of the wound follows: "The wound was received just under the left breast, and supposed, at the time, to have been mortal. A large portion of the side was blown off, the ribs fractured and openings made into the cavities of the chest and abdomen, through which protruded portions of the lungs and stomach, much lacerated and burnt, exhibiting altogether an appalling and hopeless case. The diaphragm was lacerated and a perforation made directly into the cavity of the stomach through which food was escaping at the time your memorialist was called



to his relief. His life was at first wholly despaired of, but he very unexpectedly survived the immediate effects of the wound, and necessarily continued a long time under the constant professional care and treatment of your memorialist, and, by the blessing of God, finally recovered his health and strength."

Were this the only happy ending of this accident it would be of great credit to the young army surgeon. After some ten months, when the wound was partially healed, the civil authorities, not wishing to provide for his care and keep any longer, declared him a common pauper and ordered his removal to his own home in Canada, some fifteen hundred miles distant. Dr. Beaumont vehemently protested this decision. His protests were not heeded. He saw that the only way to save the man's life, for the journey would certainly prove fatal, was to take him into his own home where he cared for him at his own expense for nearly two years at the end of which time St. Martin was able to walk a little and help himself.

Then began the series of physiological experiments which have made the name of William Beaumont known the world around in the medical profession. Wherever he was ordered to go in the constantly changing scenes of an army surgeon, he took Alexis St. Martin with him. Once Alexis ran away and returned to his home in Canada where he married and had two children. Dr. Beaumont succeeded in securing his return with his family, bearing the expense himself. The wound was in the same condition as in 1825 when he had left. Experiments were then continued until 1831 when Alexis and his family set off for Canada again, due to his wife's homesickness. Alexis, in spite of his still open wound, was strong enough to set out on the long trek in a canoe. Later he returned to Dr. Beaumont who carried on further experiments until the final ones in 1833. All this time Dr. Beaumont paid him fixed wages out of his pocket.

Alexis St. Martin lived to be eighty-three years old. He had to take much ribbing about the hole in his stomach which never did completely close. He was not, however, averse to capitalizing on it by travelling about exhibiting it. He died a poor man, a man much given to drink.

Dr. Beaumont had St. Martin under observation for four periods of differing lengths of time. He was a meticulous observer. His journal shows how carefully he recorded each experiment, how cautious he was in pronouncing any final judgments as the result

of his work. In 1833 he published a volume descriptive of his work which he entitled "Experiments and Observations on the Gastric Juice and the Physiology of Digestion". That book laid the foundation for a new and more complete understanding of physiology. It attracted wide attention at home and abroad. Its contents finally worked their way into the standard medical text books even of today.

The man and the opportunity met. Here was the opportunity in the form of a man who had had a wound which left a perforation about two and a half inches in circumference through which the contents of the stomach oozed out unless retained by a compress. Eventually a small fold of the coats of the stomach appeared, increasing in size until it was no longer necessary to use the compress. This fold adapted itself to the aperture so as to prevent the discharge of the contents of the stomach when it was full, but which was easily depressed with a finger at any time. This was the "window" in Alexis St. Martin's stomach.

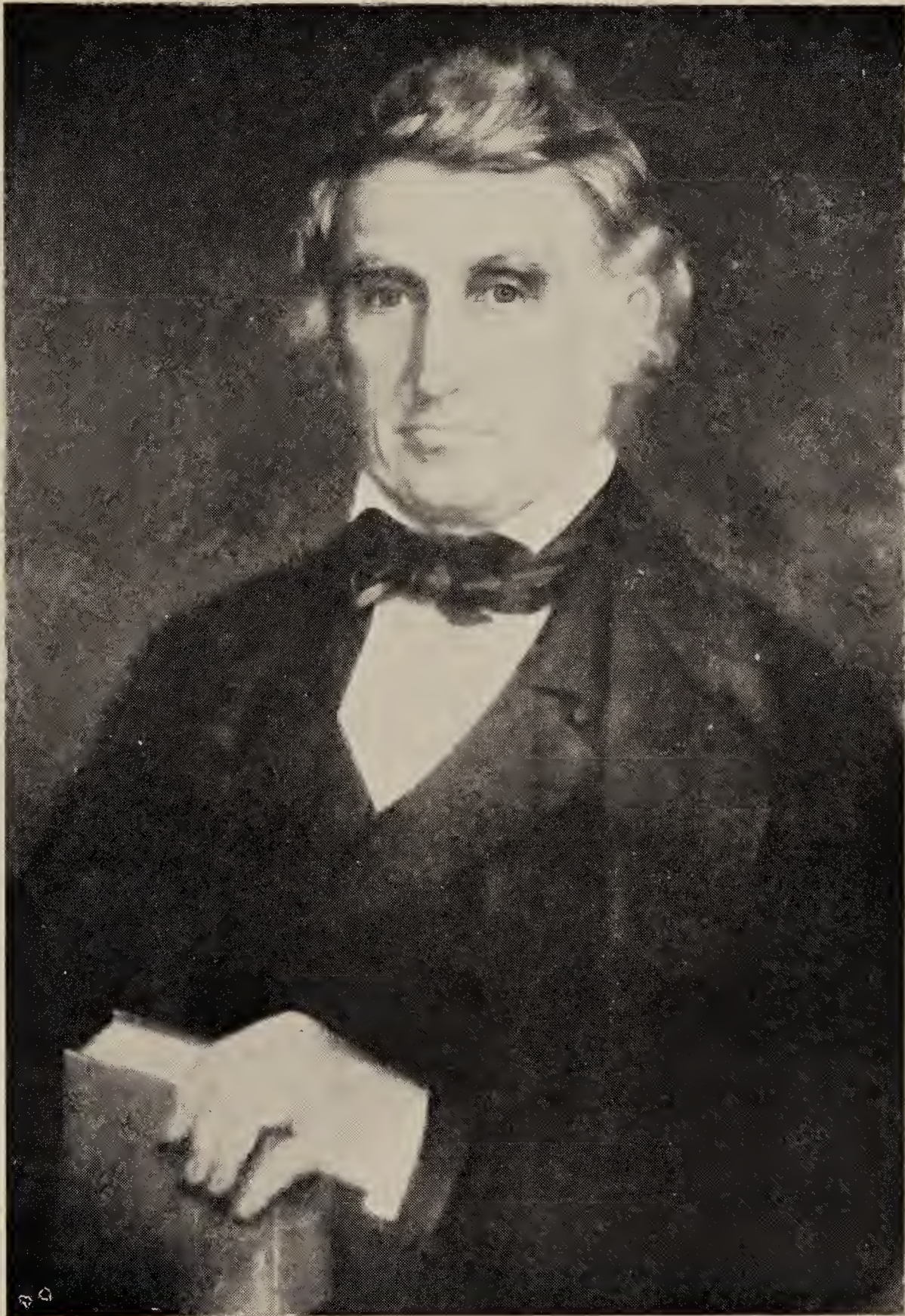
Dr. Beaumont began his experiments in May, 1825. He would extract some of the gastric juice by depressing the valve in the aperture and withdrawing the juice through a tube. He found that when the stomach was free of food it contracted upon itself. When he introduced the tube, the fluid began to flow, increasing as he moved the tube about. Probably this was the first time that gastric juice and its rate of flow in the stomach had ever been studied and analyzed. He sent specimens to various individuals for analysis, including Benjamin Silliman, the noted scientist of Yale.

Then followed a long series of observations. He fed his subject various kinds of food noting exactly how much time was taken by the stomach to digest each kind. His observations ranged through many areas, hunger and thirst, satisfaction and satiety, digestion by the gastric juice, the motions of the stomach, the uses of the bile and pancreatic juice.

The account of one experiment, taken at random from scores and scores recorded in his journal, will give an idea of his method and exactness. It reads:

"Dec. 16. At 2 o'clock, P.M. — twenty minutes after having eaten an ordinary dinner of *boiled, salted beef, bread, potatoes and turnips*, and drank a gill only of pure *water*, I took from his stomach, through the artificial opening, a gill of the contents, into an open mouthed vial. Digestion had evidently commenced, and was per-





*(Courtesy of the Library)*

DR. WILLIAM BEAUMONT

*From portrait by Chester Harding in the Medical Library of  
Washington University, St. Louis, Missouri.*





*(Courtesy of Miss Lotta E. Hale)*

BIRTHPLACE OF DR. WILLIAM BEAUMONT

*Etching By Dr. Herbert Toms*



ceptibly progressing at the time. This vial and contents were immediately placed in a basin of water, on the sand bath, at 90° or 100°, and continued there for five hours.

“The digestion of the contents continued to progress, until all was completely chymified.

“At 7 o'clock — five hours after eating his dinner — I took out a gill of pure chyme; no particles of undigested food appearing in the mixture.

“Very little difference was perceptible between this last parcel and that in the vial, digesting on the bath. The stomach had digested a little faster and more perfectly than the vial.”

Then he proceeds to interpret the significance of this experiment to him. “In this experiment, it seems, that a quantity of aliment, taken out of the stomach *twenty minutes* after having been eaten, had a sufficient admixture of gastric juice to ensure its perfect digestion when placed on the bath. An ordinary moderate meal, taken into a healthy stomach, is sooner disposed of than most physiologists are aware of; and in this case, it is probable that a sufficient quantity of gastric juice had been secreted in twenty minutes, to digest the whole quantity of aliment in the stomach.”

Thus he proceeded with his experiments, carefully recording every detail, but never making a dogmatic finding. He held his conclusions until many experiments had been made. One is struck throughout his journal by the humility of this man who was pioneering in a most important field of physiology.

Lebanon has a right to be proud of this “backwoods physiologist”. To quote the concluding words of Sir William Osler in his address before the St. Louis Medical Society, October 4, 1902: “He has a far higher honor than any you can give him here — the honor that can only come when the man and the opportunity meet — and match. Beaumont is the pioneer physiologist of this country, the first to make an important and enduring contribution to this science. His work remains a model of patient, persevering investigation, experiment and research, and the highest praise we can give him is to say that he lived up to and fulfilled the ideals with which he set out and which he expressed when he said: ‘Truth, like beauty, when ‘unadorned is adorned the most’ and, in prosecuting these experiments and inquiries, I believe I have been guided by its light.’ ”

## Chapter 8

### TWO FAMOUS LEBANON SCHOOLS

The men who made Lebanon famous believed in education though in the earliest days there is no mention of any public or private school. Children received what education they could from their parents, and, if they showed signs of promise, were then placed under the tutelage of the minister of the town who grounded them in Latin and Greek and other subjects necessary to fit them for college. Thus Governor Trumbull, as we have seen, received his education.

Governor Trumbull felt the need for an adequate school in Lebanon. His eldest son had reached the age of six. The governor decided to establish a school and secured the cooperation of twelve other citizens. Its purpose was to be "for the education of our own children, and such others as we shall agree with. A Latin Scholar is to be computed at 35s. Old Tenor, for each quarter, and a reading scholar at 20s. for each quarter — each one to pay according to the number of children that he sends and the learning they are improved about, whether the Learned tongues, Reading and writing, or Reading and English only."

Thus began the famous Tisdale School, carefully supervised by its founders, especially Jonathan Trumbull. Here all the Trumbull children, including the girls, were given, what was for that day, a good education. John Trumbull, the artist, in his "Reminiscences" writes of the school: "My native place was long celebrated for having the best school in New England, (unless that of Master Moody in Newburyport, in the judgment of some, have the precedence.) It was kept by Nathan Tisdale, a native of the place, from the time when he graduated at Harvard to the day



of his death, a period of more than thirty years, with an assiduity and fidelity of the most exalted character, and became so widely known that he had scholars from the West India Islands, Georgia, and North and South Carolina, as well as from New England and northern colonies. With this exemplary man and excellent scholar, I soon became a favorite. My father was his particular friend."

The Tisdale School left its mark upon the whole community. Undoubtedly its strong influence created the high type of leadership that marked Lebanon men of that day and sent out into the world staunch leaders in many walks of life. Several of the outstanding ministers in other towns received their early education in this little school. Here future governors and men of state were trained. Here centered a strong intellectual yeast for the town and for all the colonies. Nathan Tisdale was not only an able teacher but a staunch patriot as well. No boy could sit under his teaching and listen to the admonitions of Dr. Solomon Williams without soaking up a strong dosage of patriotic fervor.

The inscription on the tombstone of Nathan Tisdale reads:

Reader,

as thou passest, drop a tear to the memory of the once eminent American Instructor, Nathan Tisdale, a lover of Science. He marked the road to useful knowledge. A friend to his country, he inspired the flame of Patriotism. Having devoted his whole life, from the 18th year of his age, to the duties of his profession, which he followed with distinguished usefulness to Society, he died Jan'y 5th, 1787, in the 56th year of his age.

A school that deserves an even more extended comment had its beginnings in the second or North Parish at just about the time that the Tisdale School was started. The pastor of the North Parish (now Columbia) was the Rev. Eleazer Wheelock, born in Windham, Connecticut, in 1711. His grandfather, for whom he was named, left him a legacy which provided for an excellent education for the youth. After studying under various ministers in preparation for college, he entered Yale, where he rated as one of the best of the classic scholars in the senior class. He graduated in 1733.

The young man had early decided to enter the Christian ministry. He declined a call to settle on Long Island, but did accept the unanimous call from the North Parish of Lebanon. Soon after

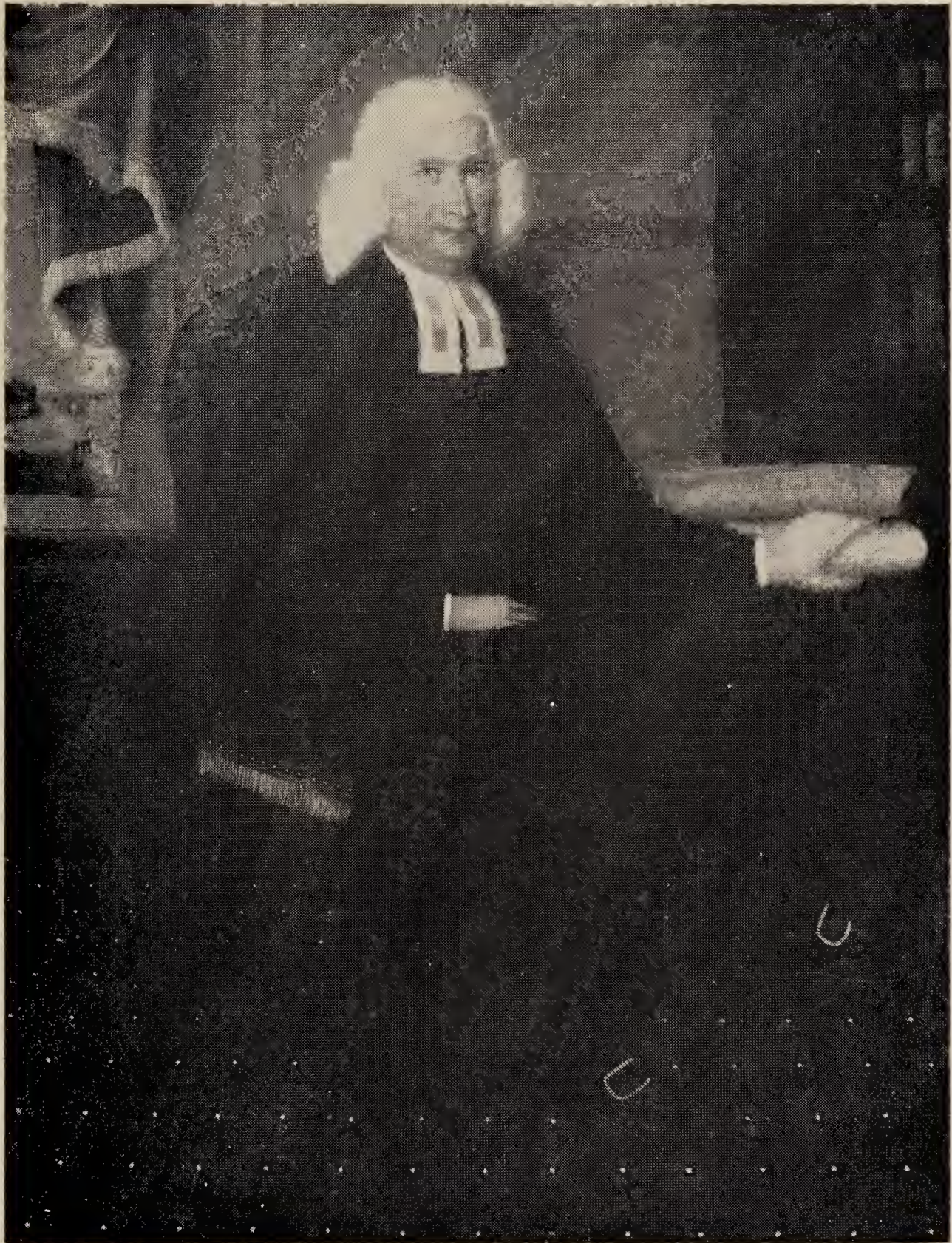
he commenced his work there the town responded to the revival spirit sweeping the country at the time under the influence of Jonathan Edwards of Northampton. He himself was much in favor of the movement, more so than some of his neighboring pastors. He threw himself wholeheartedly into the work of an evangelist preaching almost daily either at home or in his travels. He became a warm friend of George Whitefield, the evangelist from England, whose mission to this country was not received with enthusiasm in many of the parishes of Connecticut, causing much dissension both for Wheelock and for Whitefield.

Eleazer Wheelock was a man of deep piety and abounding enthusiasm. The North Parish did not seem to give him a sufficient outlet for all his energy. His salary was meagre, so meagre that he claimed that he had to draw on his own funds to support himself and family. He came to the conclusion that if the society paid him for only half his time, he was free to look about for some other work to take up the rest of his time.

He started a school in his own home for a small number of students, a few English boys preparing for college. Then Sampson Occum, a serious minded Indian, came into the picture. He wanted further education. Occum was a Mohegan, born in 1723. He came under the influence of the Great Awakening of 1739 to 1740 and thus entered the Christian faith. He epitomized to Mr. Wheelock an open door of opportunity. Here was a saved Indian. In four years time he was adequately prepared for college though his health was so impaired that he was not able to fulfill that ambition. Later, however, he was ordained as a minister of the gospel. He made his living by fishing, hunting and weaving baskets with the other members of his tribe or with the tribes to which he went as a preacher and teacher. He made a real impact upon the Indians, many of them being converted under his influence.

This man, Occum, was the chief cause of what was to prove to be a momentous step for Mr. Wheelock, and to build for him a memorial that will carry his name down the ages. He decided to widen the base of the school in his home and to solicit students from Indian tribes near and far. Before long it became exclusively an Indian School with only a few English youths who were destined to go as missionaries to the Indian tribes. By 1762 he had more than twenty Indians preparing themselves to go back to their own tribes to preach and to teach.





*(Courtesy of Dartmouth College)*

ELEAZER WHEELOCK









*A front View of DARTMOUTH COLLEGE, with the CHAPEL & HALL.*

1790

(Courtesy of Dartmouth College)





There had long been a deep concern over the state of the souls of the pagan Indians in the minds of the pious ministers of that day. Many missionaries were sent out from the settlements to work for varying lengths of time among different tribes. Famous names, such as John Eliot, David and John Brainard, Jonathan Edwards, are recorded among those who gave of their time to try to lift the Indian to a Christian standard of life.

Eleazer Wheelock saw the problem from a different angle. He felt that these sporadic efforts did not go deeply enough. After the missionary had left the Indians would drift back into their old way of life because there was no one to hold up the light for them. His idea was to take selected youths from various tribes, train them thoroughly, away from the temptations of the Indian village, instil in them a deep love for Christianity, and seek to inspire them through a long contact with a civilized way of life. Then he would send them back to live among their own people as teachers, preachers, agriculturalists, under the care of English missionaries who would visit them from time to time and direct their work.

As the popular Dartmouth College song says:

“Oh! Eleazer Wheelock was a very pious man.”

He had a profound conviction concerning his mission to teach these Indians. The task he took upon himself was costly, not alone in personal effort, but financially. Again and again he had to use some of his own funds to make up deficits, but he never wavered in his determination to push forward the school.

Wheelock's idea caught fire among ministers and laymen in the colonies, and with groups in England and Scotland who were banded together for the purpose of raising funds for the support of missionaries to the Indians. The conversion of the Indians was a serious matter to them. They felt it a blot on their own souls if they were to allow the Indians to miss the opportunity of salvation. These individuals and groups sprang to the assistance of Wheelock. There was, for them, a divine sanction about it all. Nevertheless Wheelock had what President Ezra Stiles called “much of the religious Politician in his Make”. Wheelock argued, with some justification, that if half the money spent in building forts and supporting troops against the Indians had been used in converting them there wouldn't be the cruelties and tortures of Indian warfare. Wheelock's voice was raised for the broadcasting of ideas. In that he was far ahead of his day. Worldly men were

approached with this argument and yielded to it when a more pious note would not have been heard at all. He also pointed out that the profit to the Crown would be considerable if the Indians could be won over to a Christian way of life.

Mr. Joshua Moor, a farmer in Mansfield, made the first considerable contribution for the school, a house to be used for school purposes, and two acres of land adjoining the home of Wheelock. Because of this generous gift the school was named "Moor's Indian Charity School".

Boys of eleven years of age and up were sent to the school by various missionaries among the Indian tribes. Mohawks, Delawares, Mohegans, Narragansetts, and later, many other tribes were represented. Indian girls were received who were placed in the families of the community and taught domestic arts. One of the great friends of the school for a while was Sir William Johnson, superintendent of Indian affairs in North America, who sent several promising youths from the tribes in New York.

Mr. Wheelock had found his great mission in life. He gave utterly of himself and his own resources to the cause that was close to his heart. He travelled much through the colonies soliciting funds. He wrote innumerable letters to friends of the school at home and abroad. People responded, but not sufficiently. In a term of eight years he had expended some two thousand, five hundred and sixteen dollars, while his gifts amounted to only two thousand, two hundred and sixty-two dollars. The Honorable Scotch Commissioners in Boston and the vicinity, the first public association to assist the school, asked Wheelock to send two Indians, David Fowler and Samuel Occum, to the Oneidas to seek out three likely Indian boys for the school, the society promising to support them. The province of Massachusetts voted "that Dr. Wheelock should be allowed to take under his care six children of the Six Nations," the province to bear the expense of their education, clothing and boarding for one year. This was also done.

It is evident that Dr. Wheelock had a deep paternal interest in these young Indians. He wanted them to be "happy as if they had been at home". He believed that those who took children under their care should treat them as though they were their own. As his contemporary biographer, Dr. David M'Clure, wrote: "While other teachers appeared before their pupils as scrupulous legislators or stern judges, he was always the gentle and affectionate



father of his tawny family. . . He was persuaded that the most effectual method to bring them to a friendly and perpetual alliance, was to conciliate them by kindness, and bind them to us by kind offices. His wisdom and foresight have been manifested by subsequent facts. Those tribes among whom his missionaries and school masters had mostly labored, were friendly to the colonies, and generally observed neutrality in the wars with the French, and since, in the late revolutionary wars with Great Britain."

Not all these Indian boys responded favorably to the efforts of Dr. Wheelock and his Indian School. Dartmouth College has issued a volume of "Letters of Eleazer Wheelock's Indians" which make good reading. Many of the boys, after returning to their own people, slipped back into the old ways. Drunkenness was a besetting sin. There were, however, some bright stars that justified much of what the good man was trying to do.

Of course the brightest star of all was Samuel Occum. When more funds were needed to carry forward the work, Dr. Wheelock, with the concurrence of his board of correspondents in England, decided to send Samuel to England, along with Rev. Nathaniel Whitaker, of Norwich, to solicit contributions. Occum must have been something of a sensation, the first Indian Christian preacher to plead a cause for his people. He spoke effectively in all the major cities of England and Scotland. The Earl of Dartmouth was so deeply impressed that he not only gave most generously himself but secured a contribution of two hundred pounds sterling from the king. This gift gave such a seal of approval to the cause that a fund of over ten thousand pounds sterling was collected in England and Scotland. Samuel Occum received much of the credit for the success of the undertaking. His excellent English, his fine bearing, his unassuming manner, won friends for him and his cause wherever he went.

In 1765 Dr. Wheelock took stock of the situation. As a result of the success of Occum's trip to England, Dr. Wheelock not only possessed an honorary degree from the University of Edinburgh, but he had, what must have seemed to him providential, more ready money in hand than any other educator in this country at that time. He was not wholly satisfied with the results of the school at Lebanon. He felt he was too far away from the Six Nations and from the Indians to the north and in Canada. A disaffection had grown up between him and Sir William Johnson, probably due

to the fact that Sir William belonged to the Church of England while Dr. Wheelock represented the somewhat dour Calvinism of the dissenters, the Congregationalists. He was not satisfied either with the stability of many of the boys after they went back to their own tribes. Then too, there was the fact that Yale College was located in the colony of Connecticut, also making demands for support.

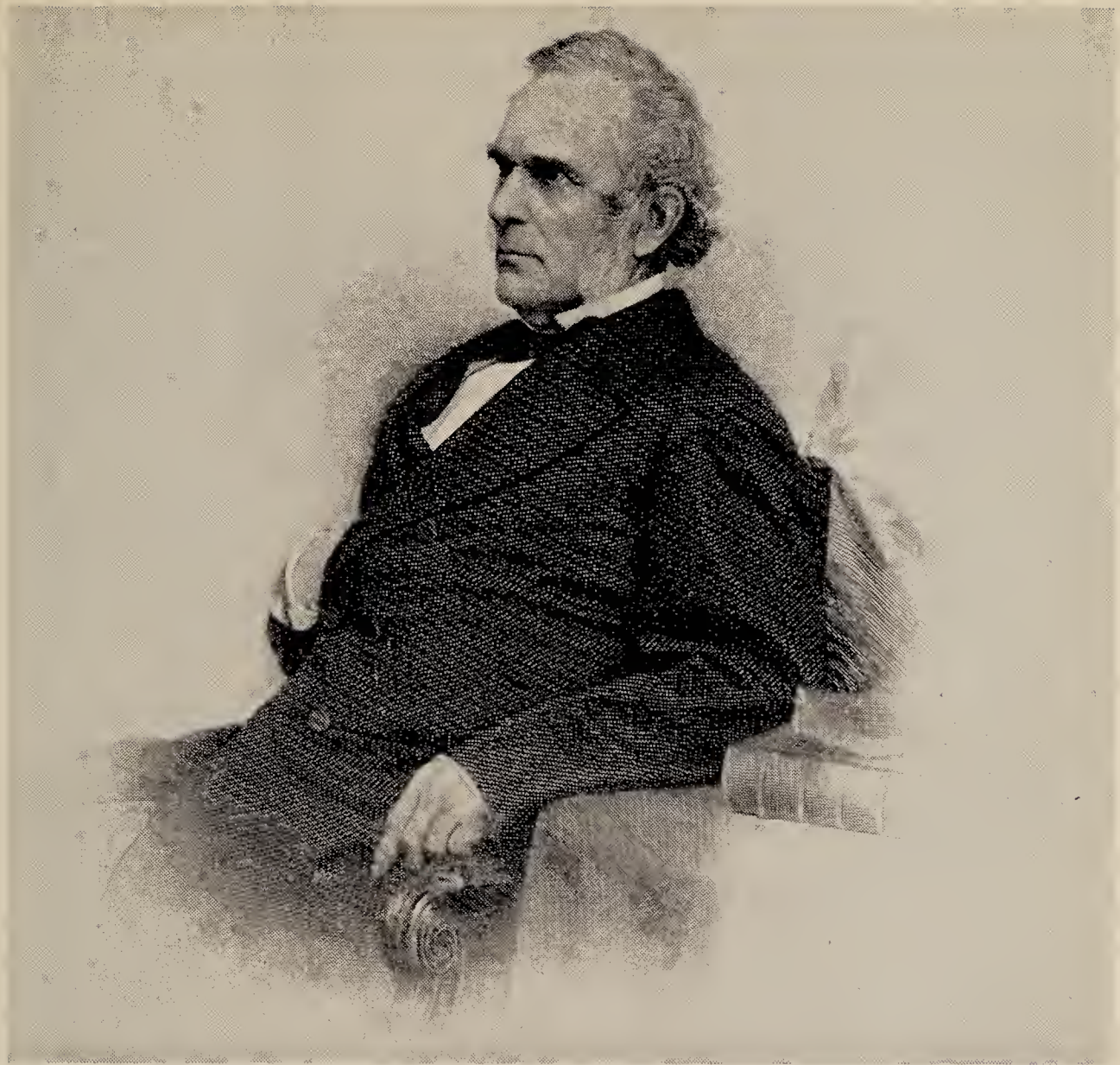
A decision was made with the consent of his advisors at home and abroad. He would move the school. He would have a school for the Indians as before, but he would also start a college for English boys. After much dickering back and forth as to locations, for he was seeking the most advantageous offer financially as well as strategically, he chose to accept the proposals of Governor Wentworth of New Hampshire, who offered him valuable lands along the bank of the Connecticut River far north in the wilderness. With indomitable courage he set out, advanced in age, to travel the one hundred and seventy miles over rough roads, some almost impossible. His biographer says nothing about the traditional barrel of rum, which has grown to three hundred barrels in the Dartmouth songs, but undoubtedly he was well fortified against the rigors of a northern winter.

The story of the struggle to fell trees, build shelters, erect the buildings for the college, is not part of this narrative. Suffice it to say, he overcame all difficulties, established his Indian school, and alongside it Dartmouth College, named in honor of his great benefactor, Earl Dartmouth. The Indian school did not long survive, but the college goes on to greater and greater glory, carrying with it down through the centuries the name of its founder, Dr. Eleazer Wheelock, who dreamed his great dream in Lebanon and made it come true. He died on April 24, 1779.

The story of Dr. Wheelock is epitomized by the weather vane on the Baker Memorial Library at Dartmouth, a tall pine tree, the good doctor preaching, the traditional barrel of rum supporting his Bible, an Indian squatting before it. His spiritual resolve is preserved in his own words:

“And it is my purpose, by the grace of God, to leave nothing undone within my power, which is suitable to be done, that this school of the prophets may be, and long continue to be, a pure fountain. And I do with my whole heart. WILL this my purpose to all my SUCCESSORS in the presidency of this seminary, to the latest posterity; and it is my last WILL, never to be revoked . . .”





(Courtesy Miss Mary A. Aiken)

Helot Thun.

Mr. W. Buckingham





## Chapter 9

### GOVERNOR BUCKINGHAM – CHRISTIAN STATESMAN

The roots of a family are always of interest whether we think of the historic lineage of a Lodge or the humble backgrounds of an Alfred Smith. They may be decisive factors in the generations to come or they may be detriments, but they usually indicate trends which sooner or later crop out.

William Alfred Buckingham, born May 28, 1804, came of good stock. The first of the name came over with Pastor Davenport to settle New Haven in 1637. Later he moved to Milford where he was one of "the seven pillars", the required number of men to establish a church at that time. A son, Thomas, became the famous pastor of the church at Saybrook. He was one of the founders of Yale, which was originally established at Saybrook, and was one of the first teachers. He was also one of the moderators for the famous "Saybrook Synod", a decisive gathering in the history of Congregationalism.

Deacon Samuel B. <sup>Buckingham</sup>~~Huntington~~, fifth in descent from this famous minister, father of William, was born in Saybrook. After his marriage he moved to Lebanon in 1803. He gave as his reasons for the choice of Lebanon, "I wanted a good farm, and then to be near the church, near the school, near the mill, and near the doctor." The mill and the doctor are no more but the church and the school are still with us.

Deacon Buckingham was a deeply religious man. He served his God and his church with the utmost devotion. His home came to be known as "The Minister's Tavern" because he was always entertaining ministers. He believed firmly in education, was active and liberal in helping to maintain the schools. After "Master Tis-

dale" died and his school was closed, Deacon Buckingham was instrumental in starting another school taught by a well qualified, college trained, teacher. Here his own children received much of their earlier education. He was a man of good business judgment, and built up a competence through his farm and from a fishing industry which he established at Saybrook. He was liberal in his gifts towards public improvements, the church, Christian missions, and especially towards the poor, traits which were later to be found in his distinguished son.

William's mother was a woman of unusual alertness of mind, of unwearied activity, of unaffected modesty, of fine business judgment which her husband fully appreciated. She could ride any horse that any of the boys could ride. She had a deep love for folks. Her hospitality was unlimited, her generosity to the poor, the ill, unstinted. Her greatest desire for her children was that expressed in her words, "Well, whatever else you are, I want you to be Christians."

With such a background only a renegade could have failed to make some mark in life. But coupled with the influence of his home, the boy William was deeply impressed by the historic significance of his native place. To him the past was a living fact. Some of the Trumbulls and Williamses were still around. And there was the Trumbull tomb containing the remains of great personages who had played a valiant part in the making of the history of a new nation. Deeply ingrained in him was a love for his nation, a love that found its fullest expression during the trying years of the Civil War, when, like Jonathan Trumbull, he guided the State of Connecticut through the labyrinth of that experience.

The boy William was a perfectly normal individual, full of energy and life. He loved horses and was a superb horseman. When enlistment was required of every young man, he enlisted in a cavalry company in his native town rather than in Norwich, where he had recently moved, because he preferred to be with those he knew. Twice a year this troop would meet for exercises in their gorgeous uniforms of scarlet coats, white pantaloons, black bear skin caps with white plume feathers and red tips, and with horses suitably equipped. It must have been a gala day for every boy in Lebanon when this troop rode at full gallop around the Green firing off the heavy pistols which the men proudly bore.



William A. Buckingham had a solid, substantial education though not an extensive one. After finishing the schools of Lebanon he attended Bacon Academy in Colchester, then rated as one of the best schools in the nation. He planned first to be a surveyor but gave it up to teach for a year or two. Then he found his real vocation, that of a business man. He switched from the making of carpets to the founding of the Hayward Rubber Company, where he rapidly accumulated a fortune which he wisely invested in other business, never in anything where he could not have some say in the policies and principles of the company. He was soon recognized as one of the leading and one of the most astute business men of Norwich. His word was as good as his bond. Men and banks trusted him absolutely, a fact which was to be abundantly attested later when he became governor.

Mr. Buckingham was always interested in good government but not in politics as such. When the Whig Party died he became a Republican because he believed in the principles for which the party stood. He was honored by the city of Norwich by election to the office of Mayor for two terms.

The situation throughout the nation in 1858 was serious. Financially it was in a panic. There was no national currency and the bills of one State might not be accepted in another. Specie payment had been suspended throughout the country. A convention of financial men was called in Connecticut which Mr. Buckingham attended. His sagacity and insight won the respect of all those present, so much so that it seemed to them that he was the man to be nominated as the Republican candidate for governor. The Springfield Republican, then one of the truly great newspapers of the country, commented on the nomination of this man in these words:

"Mr. William A. Buckingham, who is nominated for governor by the Republicans, is a leading, liberal citizen, and wealthy manufacturer of Norwich. He has intelligence, integrity and practical ability, which is creditable to the party to have recognized in his nomination, and his election will be an honor to the State. The proportion of such men in our politics is only too small."

Mr. Buckingham was elected by a fair majority in the State which at that time was dominated in the cities at least, by the Democratic party. The Legislature became largely Republican in both branches. In his inaugural address he said, "Legislation should be such as will tend to check crime; bring to speedy justice the viola-

tors of law; preserve the purity of the ballot-box; place in a desirable position public institutions; lead citizens to feel a stronger attachment to the National Union; give the greatest liberty under the restraints of law; and lead to the enactments of such statutes only as are based upon the Divine Law." He faced the questions of finance and of the rising tide against slavery, taking his stand firmly on the absolute need of ridding the country of the curse of slavery.

The next year Governor Buckingham was renominated and re-elected in spite of heavy opposition from the cities with their Democratic majorities. Then came the nomination of Abraham Lincoln for the presidency. He had visited Connecticut as the guest of Governor Buckingham who introduced him to the State. Thus began a friendship that was to last all through the war until the President's untimely death. Lincoln came to have for the Connecticut governor somewhat the same deep attachment for and confidence in him as Washington had for Connecticut's other war governor, Jonathan Trumbull.

Year after year the State of Connecticut returned Governor Buckingham to his high position. Once, when the Democrats sought to seize the election by importing hundreds of voters from New York to stuff the ballot boxes of Bridgeport, New Haven, Hartford, and other cities, he won by a margin of only five hundred votes. After that experience legislation was passed which made such practices impossible. Thereafter he won every election with increasing majorities until he finally declined a further nomination after eight strenuous years.

The years of the war saw a repetition of the years that Jonathan Trumbull was governor. Connecticut came to the fore, a State to be counted on in every emergency. At that time it had a population of less than half-a-million but it sent over fifty thousand men into service. Not a single man was drafted from Connecticut. The quotas were always filled by volunteers, a note-worthy fact due largely to the fine leadership which Governor Buckingham gave. Every regiment went to the front fully equipped at the expense of the State.

The confidence in Governor Buckingham was shown at the very first call to arms. The Legislature was not in session. Governor Buckingham, on the honor of his own name and responsibility, secured loans of two million dollars. Later the State authorized a



loan of another two million dollars and placed it in the hands of the Governor to dispense as he saw fit. He spent a large part of his own fortune in meeting the needs of the men and of their families. It is doubtful if any man in public office had more confidence reposed in him than had this native son of Lebanon. Once he visited one of the regiments, one of many visits to the war front and to Washington. When he turned to leave he said, "Well boys, is there anything else I can do for you?" One of the men spoke up and said, "If you can hurry up the paymaster we shall be obliged to you, for it is a long time since we have seen him." The Governor answered, "Certainly, I'll see what I can do about it." Before he left he had written his personal check for the amount due them.

Lebanon responded to the urgent requests of the Governor loyally. One hundred and six sons of Lebanon answered the call to arms. Twenty of these were war casualties. The town paid \$24,436.89 for bounties, premiums, commutation and support of the families of the men at the front. Individuals in the town contributed another \$14,300 for bounties to volunteers and substitutes.

After having served for eight hard years as governor of the State of Connecticut, Mr. Buckingham declined a further nomination. The State, however, refused to allow him to retire from public office. In 1868 he was elected to the United States Senate for a term of six years, terminated shortly before the expiration of the term by his death. In the Senate he served with distinction and effectiveness. His great interest was in the welfare of the Indian for whom he did much as chairman of the Committee on Indian Affairs when there were selfish interests seeking to annihilate the Indian in order to appropriate his lands.

Haniel Long in his little book, "A Letter to St. Augustine", says, "When I meet a new person, I am on the lookout for signs of what he or she is loyal to. It is a preliminary clue to the sense of belonging, and hence of his or her humanity." Later he uses a good phrase, "loyalties are the home of the heart".

In the life story of both Governor Trumbull and Governor Buckingham we find that the central loyalty upon which depended all other loyalties was that of their Christian faith. Among the many tributes expressed at the time of the death of Governor Buckingham, which occurred on February 5, 1875, was one by Senator Howe of Wisconsin, speaking on the floor of the Senate. He said, "There is in this unbelieving generation a loud, if not a large ele-

ment, desperate if not devilish, hoping nothing here and fearing nothing hereafter, which screams with derision of the Christian statesman! Standing by the grave of Governor Buckingham I must not forget to tell the world that he was what I have never dared pretend to be — a Christian statesman.”

Undergirding the lives of both our great war governors was this unshakable faith in God, a faith which permitted no political chicanery because of expediency, but always measured every act against a concept of the justice and the righteous judgment of God. Would we had more of the same in public office today! It has always been the hallmark of men who have stood the test of time.

Governor Buckingham inherited his deep faith from his father and his mother. But he made it his own. The old Meeting House in Lebanon with its able ministry, the studies under one or two of its pastors, laid a foundation of faith that stood by him in every adversity.

When he moved to Norwich to start his business career he immediately took his place in the life of the church. He taught in the Sunday School for forty years, a notable example for those who find easy excuses from such service today. He was one of the founders of the Broadway Congregational Church, later to be joined to form the United Congregational Church. He was an honored deacon of the church as was his father before him.

His benefactions were widely spread, not only among the poor, but to the churches and their organizations. He gave liberally to the old home church at Lebanon where he has a permanent memorial in the Buckingham Pastor's Library which he endowed that whoever might be the minister of that church might have funds with which to buy new books.

He took an active part in the world wide mission of the church, was a corporate member of the American Board of Commissioners for Foreign Missions, president of the American Missionary Society, and president of the Western College and Educational Society. He was an ardent supporter and generous benefactor of the American Home Missionary Society which was busy helping new churches in the expanding western frontier. He gave very substantial aid to the Ripley Congregational Church of Treor, Iowa, which church in appreciation of that service, has given the money for a memorial pew in the restored old Meeting House of Lebanon.



One of the honors which Governor Buckingham cherished most was his election as moderator for "The First Triennial Congregational Council" at Boston in 1865. It is significant that a layman was chosen for this exceedingly important post. The Congregational churches of the world were represented though the main task of the Council was to face the responsibilities of reconstruction after the devastation of war. Governor Buckingham carried through his duties with a fairness that evoked the praise of the Council. He had before him the ablest men of the church, both clergy and laymen. Many intricate problems were faced. Governor Buckingham proved himself equal to the occasion. The resolution passed at the conclusion of the Council is worthy of record here.

"Resolved, That this council tenders its thanks to His Excellency, Governor Buckingham, our honored moderator, for the dignity, urbanity and courtesy with which he has presided over its deliberations, to which in part we ascribe the pleasant cordiality of feeling, unmarred by harshness, which has prevailed throughout its earnest discussions; and as a National Council, we express the satisfaction with which we are reminded by this assembly of the early days of our Puritan history, when the chief magistrates of the colonies were the servants of the churches, and the honors of the State were humbly laid at the foot of the cross."

In the Buckingham Pastor's Library hangs a splendid oil painting of the Governor. His grave face, penetrating eyes, thoughtful gaze, look down upon the pastor as he works over his sermons as though to admonish him to be true to the faith. The portrait is less stern than the statue in his honor in the State Capitol. In the portrait you see the man, a man of faith, of insight, of wisdom, and of benevolence. Such was William A. Buckingham, a glorious son of historic old Lebanon. As inscribed upon his tombstone, "His courage was dauntless, his will inflexible, his devotion to duty supreme, his faith in God absolute."

## Chapter 10

### CONCLUSION

As stated in the preface, this little volume has not been in any sense a definitive history of Lebanon, only a few sketches of some of the highlights of an historic town. Much has been omitted that should have been included in a complete history.

The story of the various churches, past and present, should have been told; the North Parish, now Columbia, organized in 1720; Goshen, organized in 1729; Exeter, organized in 1773; the First Baptist Church, constituted in 1805; the "Christian Church", Liberty Hill, organized about 1810. Then there are the three quite recent additions of the Lutheran Church, the Roman Catholic Church, and the Jewish Synagogue. Exeter and Liberty Hill have joined with the First Congregational Church.

The sociological and political life of the town should find a place in a complete history. Changes have taken place since the early days when many different articles were manufactured here, when every stream turned the wheels of industry. Population changes have taken place. One needs only to read the names on the Honor Roll of the World Wars to recognize this fact. The school system has kept pace with changing developments in education, the sixteen little district schools giving way to a consolidated school. The Lyman Memorial High School has a history of its own worth recording, the realization of the dream of the Lyman family made possible by the gift of George W. Lyman, who bequeathed about sixty-two thousand dollars to the town for the establishment of a High School. A study should be made of the valued contributions of other races to the life of the community, and of the effect of the influx of many who earn their livelihood elsewhere.





*(Courtesy of Connecticut Circle)*

## HOME OF GOVERNOR JONATHAN TRUMBULL, JR.

The second son of the famous War Time Governor, Jonathan Trumbull, Jr., made his residence in this house, built for him by his father, Governor Jonathan Trumbull. He was paymaster-general of the Northern Department of the National Army, private secretary and first aide-de-camp to General Washington. He was afterwards Speaker of the United States House of Representatives, United States Senator, and from 1798 to 1809 Governor of Connecticut.

*(From Connecticut Circle)*





LYMAN MEMORIAL HIGH SCHOOL



This concluding chapter will serve to record a few miscellaneous items which ought not to be lost sight of as time goes on.

Mention has been made of the governors Lebanon has produced. Jonathan Trumbull served as governor from 1769 to 1784, Jonathan Trumbull, Jr., from 1798 to 1809, Clark Bissell from 1847 to 1849, Joseph Trumbull from 1849 to 1850, and William Buckingham from 1858 to 1866. Thus Lebanon natives have occupied the governor's chair for a total of thirty-seven years. Nelson Dewey, another Lebanon native, was the first governor of the State of Wisconsin, serving from 1848 to 1852.

Lebanon has produced a vast number of leaders in all walks of life and in every profession. In his sermon on the 150th anniversary of the town, Rev. J. C. Nichols makes the statement: "Without much effort we can count up three hundred and forty-five ministers of the gospel whose parents lived in this town." He mentions many early missionaries who went forth from Lebanon to the far corners of the earth, including Samuel Kirkland, father of a former president of Harvard College, Dr. Charles H. Wetmore, missionary to the Sandwich Island, as they were then called, and Rebecca Williams, who went to Syria. There have been many others down to this day when we have a member of the First Congregational Church of Lebanon and a native of the town, Miss Susan Armstrong, long a missionary in China.

Among the long list of those who have held high public office is the name of Prince Saunders, a colored man of Lebanon, at one time connected with Dartmouth College, who became minister from Haiti to Great Britain, and attorney-general of that government. Nor should the exceptional work of another Lebanon native, Charles D. Hine, first Commissioner of Education for the State of Connecticut, be passed over. He was a man of force and of vision. He did much to establish the rural schools of the State on an equal footing with the city schools. He was the son of Rev. Orlo D. Hine, pastor for thirty-one years of the First Congregational Church.

The story of the French deserter, whose grave is marked by a simple wooden cross on the side of the Exeter Road, has two versions. The first is that the townspeople complained to Count Lauzun about the French soldiers doing a little foraging on their own among the chicken yards and the pig pens of Lebanon. Their own scant fare may well have been in sharp contrast to the luxuries

enjoyed by the officers over them. Count Lauzun, mindful of the many courtesies extended to the French by the people of Lebanon, resolved on stern measures. Some hussars, fearful of the consequences, deserted. One of the more prominent of these was recaptured, ordered court-martialed, and sentenced to death at sunrise before the whole corps. The second version, probably much embellished, certainly much more romantic, is that the corps were ordered to remain in camp after sunset. One young soldier, purported to have been of the nobility, had fallen in love with a local girl. He slipped out of camp to keep tryst with her, was discovered and sentenced to be shot. A later touch to this story came during the first World War. Lieutenant Louis Raymond Abel of Lebanon was killed in action in the Argonne Forest, France, September 27, 1918. It is recorded that he "by the supreme sacrifice paid Lebanon's debt of honor to the unknown French soldier buried in this town."

Lebanon has been a colonizing community. Two items of interest come from records copied by Mrs. C. H. Foster from a pamphlet concerning the settling of Nova Scotia. One reads, "The first house erected on the present site of Bridgetown, a structure of wood and stone, cemented with mud, was built by a native of Lebanon, Connecticut, who was of Huegonot extraction." Evidently this was in 1763. The second item refers to the settlement of Port Williams. "On June 4, 1760, twenty-two vessels conveying 7,000 settlers from New London, Lebanon, Colchester, Lyme, Norwich, Killingsworth, Hebron, Saybrook, Stonington, Windham and Windsor in Eastern Connecticut made a landing here. Near the present village is the site of the French settlement 'Boudro Point'. The village was then named 'Terry Creek' after an early settler. In 1840 the name was changed to 'Port Williams', a native of Annapolis Royal who had distinguished himself in the British Expeditionary forces in Turkey." It is probable that these emigrants to Nova Scotia were attracted there by experiences during the French and English wars for the possession of Canada. Later many Tories fled to the safety of Nova Scotia. There are some sixteen or more towns bearing the name of Lebanon in the United States. Some of them, how many we do not know, were settled by men from Lebanon, Connecticut, as was Lebanon, New Hampshire. Many Lebanon families found their way into New Hampshire and Vermont, down into Pennsylvania, and out into the western states.



Though this town has been small, it has left its mark far and wide across the face of the earth.

The Old Cemetery is a spot to visit. Here scores of men who served in the American Revolution lie buried. Here are to be found the graves of the early settlers. And here is the tomb of Jonathan Trumbull, of which Rev. Orlo D. Hine wrote: "Within this mausoleum rest the sacred ashes of more of the illustrious dead than any other in the state, or perhaps the country." Within the tomb are the remains of the distinguished governor, his son, Joseph, his son, Jonathan, Jr., his son, David, his son-in-law, William Williams, all of whom played a vital part in the life of the colony, the state and the nation. With them rest the remains of their respective wives.

It has been impossible to ascertain the number of Lebanon men who served in the war of 1812. Some graves, however, in the cemeteries of this town bear the markers for veterans of that war.

One Lebanon man served in the Spanish War of 1898. Forty Lebanon men served in the first World War. One, Lieutenant Louis Raymond Abel, died in France. In the second World War one hundred and twenty-eight Lebanon men participated. Gold stars mark the names of John Bunnell, Frank Cinemella, Anthony Musial, William Perarovic, Paul R. Spellacy, Robert M. Starr, and Leslie E. Stiles.

Yes, there is much left unwritten that should be written. May the day be not far distant when a truly adequate history of the Town of Lebanon shall be written, a history that shall perpetuate the story of the heroic days of the past and record the progress of the town from its beginnings to the present day.

## ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

The author is deeply appreciative of many kindnesses extended by individuals in contributions of material, photographs, cuts, and suggestions. He wishes to express his appreciation and thanks to the following:

Theodore Sizer, Yale University, New Haven, Connecticut.

Lamont Moore, Yale University Art Gallery, New Haven, Connecticut.

Harold G. Rugg, Dartmouth College Library, Hanover, New Hampshire.

Mrs. Natalie Walsh Whitcomb, Lebanon, Connecticut.

James Sherman Pitkin, New Haven, Connecticut.

Samuel H. Williams, Glastonbury, Connecticut.

Dr. George E. McClellan, Woodstock, Connecticut.

Charles C. Hemenway, Editor of the Hartford Times, Hartford, Connecticut.

Harry F. Morse, Editor of the Connecticut Circle, New London, Connecticut.

Marion A. Murphy, Librarian, School of Medicine, Washington University, St. Louis, Missouri.

Mary A. Aiken, Norwich, Connecticut.

Sarah Abell, Town Clerk, Lebanon, Connecticut.

Rev. Howard C. Champe, First Congregational Church, Shelton, Connecticut.

Miss Lotta E. Hale, Hartford, Connecticut.

















